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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

July 19, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable TED POE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

VOTER SUPPRESSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. FUDGE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address bills pending or already signed into law in 47 States that will disenfranchise voters. These bills will prohibit address changes at the polls, end volunteer-run voter registration drives, eliminate same-day voter registration, and limit the ability of absentee voters to cast their ballot. Many of the bills include highly restrictive voter photo identification requirements.

Just this month, Mr. Speaker, the Ohio State Legislature passed and Gov-

ernor Kasich signed into law one of the most draconian voter measures in the Nation. Ohio's House bill 194 invalidates a vote where a voter properly marks the ballot in support of a particular candidate but also writes in the name of that same candidate. These bills dramatically reduce the time allotted for early voting and eliminate the requirement that poll workers direct voters to the correct precinct. These new policies are a clear attempt to prevent certain predetermined segments of the population from exercising their right to vote.

To be frank, Mr. Speaker, these efforts have an all too familiar stench of the Jim Crow era. The bill pending in my State and all the others are the works of covert opportunists seeking to disenfranchise and suppress the rights of American citizens. I'm here today to tell you that we will not relinquish our constitutional rights, and we plan to fight to uphold the franchise others fought and died to protect. We will not lie down.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend from North Carolina, Mr. G.K. BUTTERFIELD.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, across the country, Republican-led legislatures are pushing and passing laws that will suppress minority and elderly voters in the coming election. Under the guise of "eliminating voter fraud," Republicans have a solution to a problem that simply does not exist. In my home State of North Carolina, where the Republican legislature is attempting to require voter ID at the polls, there were only 44 cases of voter fraud in the 2008 and 2010 elections combined. Forty-four cases out of over 7 million ballots cast. Is this a serious voter problem? No.

Unfortunately, it is a cynical and malicious Republican attempt to suppress minority and elderly voters who turned out in historical numbers for

the 2008 elections. Almost one-fourth of African American voting age citizens and one-fifth of seniors do not have government-issued ID; yet new laws require them to pay for IDs in order to vote. This is a poll tax. We must inform our constituents that their fundamental right in a democracy is being infringed and fight back against this voter suppression epidemic.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to my good friend, the Congresswoman from Florida, CORRINE BROWN.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. All across the country we are witnessing efforts to suppress minority voting rights. How is this being done? By deterring minority voters from registering to vote and from going to the polls in an organized effort to turn the clock back to the period prior to the 1965 Voting Rights Act. I am from Florida, and in my State, our current Governor, Rick Scott, is doing everything he can to follow in the steps of what has occurred across the country, striving to stamp out the gains we worked so hard for so many, many years to achieve.

In Florida, earlier this year, Governor Scott signed the Omnibus Elections bill, which takes away many of Florida voters' basic rights. Its provisions include numerous hideous items much like those in bills passed in other State legislatures around the Nation to keep African Americans and Hispanics from going to the polls or refraining from participating in early voting in the upcoming 2012 elections.

The new law passed in Florida would make voting more difficult for people who have recently changed residence as well as shorten early voting time, from 14 days to 6 days. It would provide a 100-foot buffer between voters standing in line to get information. And it goes on and on and on. In addition, it imposes a \$50 fine on election supervisors who are late in filing routine reports to the State.

After what happened in Florida in the 2000 coup d'etat, it is amazing to

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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me that Florida would pass such hideous laws. I think it's very important that the Justice Department weigh in and that the people in Florida are not disenfranchised.

THE NATIONAL DEBT AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, as our Nation's debt now approaches its current \$14.29 trillion limit, many Americans rightfully ask: How did this happen?

In the past decade alone, Congress has authorized an increase in the debt 10 times. When Republicans had controlled the White House and Congress, it was Republicans who voted for it. When Democrats have controlled the White House and Congress, it has been Democrats who have voted for it.

The Federal Government has only managed to balance its budget five times in the last 50 years, most recently with President Clinton, a Democrat, and Republican control in the House of Representatives. Washington now borrows approximately 40 percent of every dollar it spends. Foreign investors hold half of our Nation's \$14 trillion debt—not only from China, but from Great Britain, Saudi Arabia, and other places as well. Admiral Mullen, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has called the national debt “the single biggest threat to our national security.”

For the first time in modern history, last year's Congress passed no budget, no fundamental blueprint for spending, and no final decision on spending levels through the appropriations process for the entire fiscal year. We've been operating under a series of continuing resolutions, which has led to uncertainty as to Federal levels of spending and as to tax rates, which in turn has led to a lack of hiring in the private sector, with an unemployment rate of 9.2 percent, which in turn has led to less revenues in Federal coffers—a vicious cycle that cannot continue.

Any agreement to President Obama's request to increase our borrowing limit should include a real plan to bring our fiscal house in order and reduce the Nation's unsustainably high levels of Federal spending, debt and deficits. This should include substantial reductions in current spending—at least \$100 billion in fiscal year 2012—limiting Federal expenditures to a certain percentage of gross domestic product.

The historic norm has been 20 percent over the last generation. Tragically, we're now at 24 percent—and safeguards that will restrict future spending, such as a balanced budget amendment, which is contained in 49 of our 50 States.

Also, we must put partisanship aside and include reforms to save Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. If we do nothing, for example, regarding Medicare—and the President's budget

in the winter did nothing—the program will begin to go bankrupt in 2024, 13 years from now. That is simply unsustainable and unacceptable.

When I was a boy and a young man, the fundamental issue confronting the Nation was the threat of the Soviet Union and international communism, the focus of evil in the modern world, as President Reagan said.

□ 1010

The fundamental issue confronting the Nation in the 21st century is fiscal responsibility. Will our children live in a diminished America? Will the promise of America that each generation will do better than the generation before it continue to exist? Will we continue to lead the world or will leadership pass to China or India or to some other place?

This is the great issue confronting the people of the United States, and it is the great issue confronting us here in Congress as well. Let's get our fiscal house in order.

THE REAGAN MYTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, an American President once wrote a letter to the Senate majority leader, urging him to raise the debt ceiling.

The President wrote: “The full consequences of a default or even the serious prospect of default by the United States are impossible to predict and awesome to contemplate.

“Denigration of the full faith and credit of the United States would have substantial effects on the domestic financial markets and on the value of the dollar in exchange markets.”

That President's name was Ronald Reagan, and the year was 1983.

He closes his letter to Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker, saying: “The risks, the costs, the disruptions, and the incalculable damage lead me to but one conclusion: The Senate must pass this legislation before the Congress adjourns.”

Watching the House floor 28 years later, you could be forgiven for being surprised Reagan would ever say such a thing. That's because the Reagan who gets referenced on the floor here is a myth while the Reagan who wrote to Howard Baker urging pragmatism was a man.

The real Ronald Reagan once said: “All of us have grown up accepting, with little question, certain images as accurate portraits of public figures—some living, some dead. Seldom, if ever, do we ask if the images are true to the original.”

In the year of his 100th birthday, the Great Communicator might be amazed at how far his own image has shifted from the original.

He'd see his most dedicated followers using his name as justification for saying “no” to honoring our debts. He'd

see his legacy used to play chicken with the world's greatest economic engine; but as Reagan often quoted John Adams, “facts are stubborn things.”

The facts are these: President Reagan raised the debt ceiling 18 times. He recognized the danger of economic brinkmanship. President Reagan took responsibility when the deep tax cuts of 1981 didn't produce the promised revenue. He worked with both sides of the aisle to find a more sustainable balance. He worked with Tip O'Neill to shore up Social Security. He worked with my predecessor Dan Rostenkowski to reform the Tax Code and eliminate tax loopholes.

All of these actions would be condemned as tax increases by the purists who follow the image instead of the man. Image worship is a bipartisan disease, but we all do ourselves and our Nation a disservice by distorting past images to justify present policies.

As another American President, John F. Kennedy, once put it: “The greatest enemy of the truth is very often not the lie—deliberate, contrived and dishonest—but the myth—persistent, persuasive and unrealistic.”

To say I disagreed with President Reagan on a number of issues is an understatement, but the more I get to know the myth, the more I like the man. President Reagan was not a picture on the wall. He was President of the United States for two terms in office, and he did his best to fulfill his sworn obligations.

We in Congress would do well to follow his lead and focus on what we can do during our short time in office. Let's truly follow President Reagan's example and govern for the future, not a past that never existed. Instead of talking to portraits, let's talk to each other.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I am once again on the floor of the House with a picture of children who have lost a loved one in Afghanistan. Eden and Stephanie Balduf, shown here at Arlington Cemetery, lost their father, Sergeant Kevin Balduf, on May 12 of this year.

Sergeant Balduf, who was stationed at Camp Lejeune Marine Base, and Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Palmer, stationed at Cherry Point Marine Base, were sent with the mission to train Afghan citizens to become police. The men had just sat down to dinner when a rogue trainee opened fire, killing both men.

In an e-mail to his wife the day before he died, Sergeant Balduf said: “I don't trust them. I don't trust them for anything, not for anything at all.”

This brings me to a quote from AC Snow's recent column in the Raleigh News and Observer, titled, “Time to

Bring Them Home. Let Them Live.” Mr. Snow is a well-known and respected correspondent in North Carolina.

“It seems we never run out of wars. It is as if one small country after another sends out engraved invitations reading: ‘We’re having a war. Please come.’”

“And Uncle Sam goes, lugging borrowed billions and thousands of young men and women to sacrifice on the altar of so-called ‘freedom’ or ‘nation-building.’”

Mr. Speaker, I go back to the two little girls in this picture. How many more children will be at the graveside of a loved one? How many more will have to know the pain of war?

I further quote from AC Snow’s article, which is quoted from the play *Les Misérables*: “He is young. He is only a boy. You can take. You can give. Let him be. Let him live. Bring him home. Bring him home. It’s way past time to stop playing politics with the lives of America’s youth. Bring them home. Let them live, not just 30,000 of them—all of them.”

I agree with Mr. Snow and many others across this Nation who are calling for our troops to come home. Bin Laden is dead, and there are fewer than 30 al Qaeda remaining in Afghanistan, according to intelligence reports. We have done our job. We have won. It is time to bring them home.

The reason I continue to come down here on the floor is because of a statement former Secretary of Defense Bob Gates made before the Armed Services Committee in February, and I sit on that committee:

“That is why we believe that, beginning in fiscal year 2015, the United States can, with minimal risk, begin reducing Army active duty end strength by 27,000 and the Marine Corps by somewhere between 15,000 and 20,000. These projections assume that the number of troops in Afghanistan would be significantly reduced by the end of 2014, in accordance with the President’s strategy.”

I share this because I believe we are still in a black hole even with the President withdrawing 10,000 troops this year. Let’s not wait until 2014 or 2015. Let’s not bring any more pain to our military families. Our job is done. Let’s bring them home.

Mr. Speaker, before closing, one more time, on the faces of these little girls is the face of pain, of a daddy they will never grow up to know. It is time to bring them home, Mr. Speaker. It is time to bring them home.

On behalf of Eden and Stephanie and all the children across this country who have lost loved ones, may God bless you and your families. May God bless our men and women in uniform, and may God continue to bless America.

JOBS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, as we go home to our districts, I am certain that no constituents have said they wake up in the morning wondering about what we’re going to do with the debt ceiling. In my district, most wonder how they’re going to get a job, how they’re going to take care of their families.

So many Americans have lost their jobs through no fault of their own. They didn’t commit any wrongdoing. They lost their savings. Many are homeless. They’ve lost their self-esteem. They’ve lost their health benefits, and they’re looking toward this Congress to kind of put America on the right track—to restore the middle class that made us such a great and successful Nation.

Instead of talking about jobs, we find ourselves holding the President hostage by saying, unlike other Presidents, we’re not going to increase the debt ceiling. This is a technical way of saying that we owe \$14.3 trillion to people whom we borrowed from for unnecessary wars, for tax cuts that shouldn’t have been there, and for a variety of things that unemployed people throughout the United States are just not responsible for. Instead of talking about jobs, they will tell you we have to cut spending.

□ 1020

So the people who have lost their jobs may lose their Medicaid, those who are poor enough to be eligible for it; the older people that soon will be or are entitled to Medicare and the hospitals and the doctors and the nurses; and, of course, Social Security that so many millions of Americans have come to depend on. Cutting these benefits are not just cutting benefits for the vulnerable, but we’re cutting jobs. You can’t cut benefits without cutting hospital workers, without cutting off nurses and doctors and those that provide the services for the vulnerable.

Is this the only way we can go? Of course not.

Pastors and rabbis and imams all over the country ask: Why are you picking just on the vulnerable? Why are you picking on the sick and the poor and the aged?

Is there another way that we can resolve this problem? You bet your life there is. Because, just as in biblical days, we have among us those who really God has blessed with riches that our parents and grandparents never thought could be accumulated. Are we asking them to pay just a little bit to ease the pain for those that are vulnerable?

I don’t know about you, but our pastors and rabbis have spoken out. And for those of you who don’t have pastors and don’t have rabbis or don’t have time to listen to our obligation morally, to the people that can’t speak for themselves, the people who have no lobbyists, I will place into the RECORD what 4,000 pastors have said is not just our legal and political obligation but,

more importantly, our moral obligation. I will place this into the RECORD for when we come back and try to decide what is our responsibility.

Some people have come to this Congress with a commitment not to raise taxes no matter what, whether we’re attacked, whether the revenue’s coming from obscene tax offenses, whether the Tax Code could be improved.

For those of you who remember kamikaze pilots, these were people who were prepared to lose their own lives in fighting our forces during World War II even if it meant that they were destroying somebody.

There are people here that are prepared to destroy the fiscal reputation of the United States of America so that they can go back home and say they fulfilled their commitment about not raising revenues and about slashing and cutting those people that made this great country the great country that it is.

So I see on television no one talking about the poor. But thank God we do have ministers, priests, rabbis, imams, and of all of the religions and people that have come together, most of whom from foreign lands, that say this land is my land and in this country a poor person can make it, and we never, never, never will forget where we’ve come from.

Some people have managed to get out of poverty. Others have enjoyed the middle class. Let’s hope that our kids and grandkids will be able to enjoy the benefits of doing the right thing.

[From Faith in Public Life and Sojourners, July 19, 2011]

AN OPEN LETTER TO CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT—LISTEN TO YOUR PASTORS

More than 4,000 of them believe the federal budget is not just a fiscal document, but a moral one.

We are local pastors. We work, pray, and do whatever we can to remain faithful to the responsibility of every Christian to help the poor. Still, we can’t meet the crushing needs by ourselves.

Programs like SNAP, WIC, Medicaid, and Head Start aren’t just abstract concepts to us; they serve the same people we serve. There are changes that can be made or efficiencies that can be found, but every day we see what government can do.

We have seen government support allow young people to be the first members of their families to get college degrees, ensure mothers can feed their children a healthy diet, enable those with disabilities to live fulfilling lives, give much needed medical care to those who can’t afford it, support seniors, provide housing for families, and help people in finding a job.

As Christians, we believe the moral measure of the debate is how the most poor and vulnerable people fare. We look at every budget proposal from the bottom up—how it treats those Jesus called the “least of these” (Matthew 25:45). They do not have powerful lobbies, but they have the most compelling claim on our consciences and common resources.

As Christian leaders, we are committed to fiscal responsibility and shared sacrifice. We want to support you in reducing the deficit. There is more need today than churches can meet by themselves. This is why we join in the “Circle of Protection” around programs

that meet the essential needs of hungry and poor people at home and abroad.

THE DEBT CEILING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LONG) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, our debt ceiling is currently \$14.3 trillion—or more than \$45,000 for every American man, woman, and child. By the end of the year, our debt will be larger than the size of our entire economy, a significant amount of that owed to foreign countries. Oddly enough, even though we're driving faster and faster towards a cliff, instead of slowing down, President Obama is hitting the gas.

After President Bush's second term, the national debt was \$10 trillion. This was accrued over 43 Presidents. In just 2½ years, President Obama has managed to increase our Federal deficit by over \$4.3 trillion, 40 percent since he was sworn into office January 20 of 2009.

Let me say that again. In 2 years our government has borrowed nearly 40 percent of the debt that it took 200 years to accumulate. There is no word in the English language for this kind of recklessness.

At the turn of the 20th century, the Federal Government consumed about 6 to 8 percent of the gross domestic product. Back then America became the greatest industrial power and the wealthiest economy in the history of the world when the Federal Government spent just between 6 and 8 percent of GDP. Today, the Federal Government spends no less than 25 percent of GDP. And on top of that, the rest of the government, State and local, spends even more. Total, around 40 percent of GDP is consumed by government at all levels.

What have we gotten for this unprecedented level of Federal spending? Our infrastructure is crumbling, our economy is weak, and jobs are not being created. If government spending stimulated anything, then business should be booming. It turns out the only stimulus going on is the debt.

And despite all of that, despite common sense, the President is asking for even more credit. The President wants us to trust that government will live within its means this time. Giving a blank check to the government makes as much sense as investing with Bernie Madoff.

Democratic leaders think they can continue to spend as much money as they want whenever they want to. They are upset that Republicans are making a big deal about the debt ceiling increase because they want to be able to spend taxpayer dollars without ever having a check or balance to ask if that spending is necessary.

Enough is enough. It's time to end this irresponsible spending. Families in southwest Missouri cannot spend 42 percent more than they take in, and

neither should the Federal Government.

I came to Washington to stop the spending and abuse of government. That's why I will fight this debt ceiling increase without a serious plan to reduce our debt. And the people of southwest Missouri agree with me.

I have had hundreds of phone calls and emails and messages in my office about the debt ceiling. It is something that the people of the Seventh District feel very strongly about, and I want to share a few of their thoughts with you:

Fifty-one percent of the calls and letters to my office say don't raise the debt ceiling under any circumstances; 26 percent say raise it with substantial cuts; 10 percent are okay to raise it whatever; and 10 percent say you can raise it but do not increase taxes. The people have spoken.

There's an old saying that if you owe the bank a thousand dollars, that's your problem; but if you owe the bank a million dollars, that's the bank's problem. We're at a point where the financial community, our bank, is starting to fear that our problem is becoming their problem. Two major rating agencies, Moody's and Standard & Poor's, have publicly announced that they are going to reassess America's AAA credit rating.

The people have spoken. The business community has spoken. When will the President and the Democrats listen?

Every dollar we spend on political preferences is one more dollar American families cannot spend on their children, one more dollar that small business cannot spend hiring an employee, one more dollar that a worker can't save for his retirement. This time it's serious.

Cut, Cap, and Balance is the first step but by no means the last. We have to make immediate cuts to show the financial community that we're serious about being good on our promise to repay our debts. And the President needs to get serious. He refused to put his plan in writing but vows to veto our Cut, Cap, and Balance. A speech or a framework is not a plan.

Well, the first thing to do when you dig yourself into a hole is to stop digging. We need commonsense reforms that will make sure this will not happen again. We need spending caps, a balanced budget amendment, spending cuts which will balance our budget. But most of all, we need something that's not very common: common sense.

I would like to close with one of the hundreds of letters from one of my constituents:

"Dear Congressman LONG, do not budge. We put you in office to stop these big spenders. Go ahead and call his bluff. I am in tornado-ravaged Joplin and rebuilding my house. I'm glad you are covering my wallet in Washington."

VOTER ID SUPPRESSION LAWS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia, BOBBY SCOTT.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I rise today in opposition to an unfortunate trend that seems to be creeping up all over the country: laws requiring voters to show some form of photo ID before voting. Currently, 29 States have laws on the books requiring all voters to show some form of identification before voting, and many of these require a photo ID.

Now, my home State of Virginia requires voter identification or a signature on an affirmation of identity form, which is a much better process.

□ 1030

This year, many other State legislatures are considering measures that would require voters to have an actual identification. While voter ID may seem like a good way to keep voter fraud at a minimum, this type of requirement has serious unintended consequences.

Mr. Speaker, requiring a photo ID will make it a little bit more difficult for some voters to exercise their right to vote. We should particularly be concerned that provisions like these have a disparate impact on minorities. One nationwide study of voting-age citizens found that African Americans are more than three times as likely as others to lack a government-issued photo ID. And these laws have unintended consequences, such as the situation where nuns were denied the right to vote because they couldn't produce a photo ID, even though they were personally known to the election officials.

It's obvious that voter ID laws will not prevent people from voting, but it creates another little barrier that will mean that a few potential voters will not get their paperwork in on time and will miss the voter registration deadlines. These few voters could make the difference in an election.

Mr. Speaker, these voter ID laws are a solution in search of a problem. There's no credible evidence that in-person voter fraud is a persistent problem. And the voters who will be denied the opportunity to vote under these processes will certainly outnumber any fraudulent votes that are prevented. Voting is not an arbitrary, inconsequential act.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that we ensure that every eligible voter is given the opportunity to vote free from any unnecessary barriers.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. I now yield to the gentleman from Georgia, Congressman JOHN LEWIS, "Mr. Civil Rights."

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the Voting Rights Act made it possible for all of our citizens to become participants in the democratic process.

Mr. Speaker, voting rights are under attack in America. There's a deliberate

and systematic attempt to prevent millions of elderly voters, young voters, students, minority, and low-income voters from exercising their constitutional right to engage in the democratic process. Voter ID laws are becoming all too common.

But make no mistake: Voter ID laws are a poll tax. People who struggle to pay for basic necessities cannot afford a voter ID.

The right to vote is precious and almost sacred and one of the most important blessings of our democracy. Today we must be strong in protecting that blessing. We should be making it easy, simple, and convenient for people to vote.

Before the Voting Rights Act of 1965, people stood in unmovable lines. Sometimes people were asked to count the number of bubbles in a bar of soap, the number of jelly beans in a jar. People were asked to pass a so-called literacy test. Lawyers, doctors, teachers, and college professors flunked the so-called literacy test. Before the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 46 years ago, many people were jailed, beaten, and some were even killed for trying to register and vote.

We must not step backward toward another dark period in our history. The vote is the most powerful nonviolent tool we have in a democratic society. We must fight back. We must speak up and speak out. We must never, ever go back.

We will not stand idly by while millions of Americans are denied their right to participate in the democratic process.

CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act.

The national debt has shattered confidence in our economy, has cost jobs, and is preventing our economic recovery. Working families across our Nation are living within their means during tough times. If the rest of America gets it, why doesn't Washington?

I recently did a Main Street-style walk-and-talk in my district where I met with a number of small business owners and their employees. They shared their concern about our out-of-control debt and frustration with Washington for enacting policies that hold down job creation and economic growth rather than fostering an environment that will enable them to thrive. But the comment I heard most often was, "What is Washington thinking?" I told them I really don't understand it either.

President Obama has spent his administration enacting policies that have added more debt to our Nation than the previous 43 Presidents combined. The tragic reality is that the President's big spending policies only

made things worse. Unemployment is at 9.2 percent, and that doesn't count the millions who have given up. The President merely fomented a cycle of debt and joblessness that defines the last 2½ years, which has placed us where we're at today.

Now, with the national debt at crisis levels, he is standing in the way of commonsense solutions; offering only lectures, not leadership. He has asked Congress to consent to continue business as usual without making serious spending reforms.

As a matter of conscience, this Congress cannot support allowing President Obama to continue to steer America's debt past the point of no return. Mr. Speaker, we will be judged harshly, and rightfully so, by future generations if we fail to act. The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act ends the era of rampant government spending. It immediately reduces spending by \$100 billion, cuts \$6 trillion over the next 10 years, and demands a strong balanced budget amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act is what the American people want and what Washington desperately needs.

CONGRATULATING THE ELECTRIC BOAT WORKFORCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, in March of 2009, the USS *Hartford*, a 17-year-old Los Angeles-class submarine, was steaming into port in the Strait of Hormuz. Visibility was low, and they were riding at ocean surface level when, out of the blue, they were struck by the USS *San Antonio*, an LPD amphibious ship. When it violently collided with the *Hartford*, the *Hartford* rolled 85 degrees, throwing sailors, anything that wasn't tied down, flying into the air.

The good news is that the collision did not result in a breach of the submarine. There was no leak through the pressure hull. But the bad news is that the sail of the submarine was badly torn 20 to 25 degrees.

The ship limped home to its home port in Groton, Connecticut, which was a tough voyage going across the Atlantic, again riding at the surface, which, as many people who know submariners know, is the worst place to ride a submarine. But it made it back to port.

And then the challenge was before the shipyard about how to repair a ship that was 17 years old, that was built with totally different technology, hand-drawn prints, a workforce that had largely retired, and parts that really weren't in existence anymore. But the folks at Electric Boat, 450 strong, came together as a team and, calling back some of their retirees, were able, over a period of 18 months, to perform the most ultimate body shop repair job of a Los Angeles-class submarine.

And I'm happy to report to this House that the USS *Hartford* is now back underway, performing its missions, and will extend the life of, again, a submarine that this country invested close to \$1 billion 20 years ago when it was first constructed. Again, the replacement costs, if this work had not been done, would be close to \$2 billion. What the folks at EB were able to do, again, at a cost of about 5 percent of that, was to get the USS *Hartford* operating and at great savings to the U.S. taxpayer.

And I want to share this story because it demonstrates that when you invest in people, nuclear welders today, as Admiral Kevin McCoy testified before the House Armed Services Committee last week, have a value to the U.S. workforce almost as great as a surgeon in terms of the skills that they have.

□ 1040

When you invest in people, when you have those skills and when you have the kind of teamwork that we see at EB, this country can succeed in ways that no other country in the world can even touch us. The complexity of a nuclear submarine matches anything that a space shuttle entails in terms of the challenges to support human life in an environment where human life cannot exist. And the capabilities of one of these vessels, again, defy almost human imagination.

So congratulations to the workforce at Electric Boat for showing again that the United States of America is capable of almost taking on any challenge when it has the right combination of investment, skill and talent, something which, as we look at our challenges that we face as a Nation today, is something that we can both take inspiration from, but also learn valuable lessons about where the right priorities of this government should be. And investing in education, workforce skills again is the best investment to grow this economy and solve America's problem.

Mr. Speaker, I will include in the RECORD an article from The New London Day written by Jennifer McDermott, which again documents this amazing story of technological success.

[From TheDay.com, July 17, 2011]

ELECTRIC BOAT GETS USS HARTFORD BACK TO SEA

(By Jennifer McDermott)

REPAIRS TO DAMAGED SUB TOTAL \$120 MILLION

GROTON, CT.—Repairing a severely damaged 17-year-old submarine with the technology Electric Boat uses to build modern subs was like reconstructing a Ford Model T in a Lexus shop.

The Navy contracted with EB for about \$120 million worth of repairs to the USS *Hartford* after the Los Angeles-class submarine collided with a Navy amphibious ship in the Strait of Hormuz in 2009.

The Navy wanted the submarine back at sea as soon as possible—ideally, in one year.

The repair team at EB knew the *Hartford* (SSN 768) had rolled about 85 degrees and

damaged its sail, hull and port bow plane. But the destruction turned out to be far worse than expected.

The sail leaned 15 to 20 degrees to the starboard side. Seventy-five percent of it was torn off. It would have to be removed to patch the hull.

There would be no saving the sub if the Hartford did not keep its shape when welders cut into the hull to remove the damaged section, or after they patched it.

And the team discovered after the submarine was taken out of the water that the bow plane had caved in to the ballast tank. The masts and antennas weren't working because hydraulic fluid had shot through the system after the collision and damaged many valves.

"In my 38 years here, we have never worked on something of this magnitude, repairwise," said Stanley J. Gwudz, the director of ship's management who likened the repairs to reconstructing a Model T.

This type of repair is "about as complex as they come," said Rear Adm. David M. Duryea, deputy commander for undersea warfare.

RETIREES SHARE KNOWLEDGE

Because EB and its relatively young work force are set up for building today's Virginia-class submarines—not for major repairs to the aging Los Angeles class—some former employees came out of retirement to share their knowledge.

The trick was figuring out how to combine today's technology with yesterday's hand-drawn designs, some of which didn't match up. Daniel Vieira, the ship's manager for the repair project, laughed when asked how such a feat was accomplished.

"I lived it, and I'm not sure," Vieira said. "It was through a lot of pain. You know, you depend on a lot of people with a lot of experience and training to come back to you and say, 'This is right. This isn't. We need to fix this.'"

The biggest problem was that the sail had crushed into the pressure hull. It had been 20 years since anyone in the shipyard had performed a major cut into a submarine's hull, the pressure-tight shell of a submarine, while maintaining the circularity of the ship.

"The pressure hull is sacred ground," Vieira said. "It keeps water out. Anytime you have anything that penetrates the pressure hull, it's a big deal."

The half-moon shaped patch to fix the hull measured more than 150 square feet.

"It's very easy to get warping or misalignment or change the geometry with all the welding, which would have significant effects," Vieira said. "The ship is shaped that way for a reason."

Welders and shipfitters at EB's Quonset Point facility built a new sail using the modular construction techniques developed for the Virginia class. Years ago they would have had to fix the hull, then build the sail piece by piece on the submarine.

The repairs could have taken years if each step were done in sequence, instead of at the same time, Gwudz said.

USEFUL LESSONS LEARNED

Few vendors still make parts for Los Angeles-class submarines.

In the crash, the bow plane was forced back into its locking mechanism, caving the structure into the ballast tank. A 16-inch diameter shaft bent 4 inches, but a new shaft wasn't available. So EB engineers incorporated the 4-inch bend into the design. A new, fully functional bow plane was built around the bent shaft to dive the sub.

The damaged valves were replaced.

Testing at sea in January showed the repairs to be successful.

Gwudz could only recall one other repair job at EB where the level of damage on a submarine came close to the severity of the Hartford's. In the early 1980s, he said, a Los Angeles-class submarine needed its masts fixed and a patch underneath. The graving dock was secured for this confidential job and Gwudz said he was never told how the submarine sustained its damage.

EB can now use what it learned working on the Hartford to repair other Los Angeles-class submarines more effectively, Gwudz said. The USS Alexandria (SSN 757) is at EB for routine maintenance.

Instead of taking a ventilation valve apart to see which of the older parts are corroded, for example, Gwudz said they will know to get new flappers or linkages because these parts were corroded on the Hartford. That gives vendors more time to make the parts so they are ready when EB needs them.

Robert Hamilton, an EB spokesman, said the Hartford repair job "used 50 Connecticut suppliers with a total spend of \$3.5 million."

The project took more than one million man-hours and the efforts of 450 people at its peak.

The \$120 million price tag is less than 5 percent of what it would have cost to replace the Hartford with a new Virginia-class submarine.

"Everybody in the Navy had a lot of confidence in EB and the NAVSEA team to execute the repairs," Duryea said, referring to the Navy command responsible for overseeing the construction and maintenance of the Navy's ships. "Certainly we knew it would be a challenge, but EB does a very good job at executing complex work. This was just another example of the fine work they were able to do."

"We needed this capability out in the fleet," Duryea said. "Hartford has a lot of good life left in her, and we wanted to get her back to sea."

HARTFORD AT FAULT

EB originally built the Hartford at a cost of about \$900 million.

The submarine returned to the Naval Submarine Base in February, nearly two years after the March 2009 crash and 18 months after arriving at EB.

The submerged submarine and the USS New Orleans (LPD 18), a San Diego-based amphibious ship, had both been heading into port when the collision occurred.

The fuel tank ruptured on the New Orleans, creating a 16-by-18-foot hole and spilling about 25,000 gallons of diesel fuel. Two ballast tanks were damaged.

Navy investigators concluded the crew of the Hartford was at fault. The sub's leadership was called "ineffective and negligent" and sailors were accused of falling asleep on the job, spending too much time away from their stations and chatting informally while working.

Vieira could see a silver lining in the task of repairing the Hartford. He said the repairs were an opportunity for senior employees to impart their knowledge to the younger ones so these newer employees will be able to help with work on the Los Angeles class in the future.

Duryea agreed that there were technical lessons learned but, he said, "my only hope is we don't have to do these types of repairs again."

RAISING THE DEBT LIMIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAUL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, the Congress is concerned about the debt. The people are concerned about the debt. The markets are concerned about the debt. The world is concerned about the debt and what we're doing here today because we live with a world fiat dollar standard, and so the whole world is engulfed in this very serious problem.

I do not understand, though, that if the debt is the problem, and I agree, the debt is the problem, that for us to come here and raise the debt by \$2.4 trillion is the solution. That just baffles me. I think it's a distraction, because when a country gets indebted to the degree that we're indebted, the country always defaults. This is historic, especially if the country is a significant country. On occasion a small country will quit sending the checks and they'll go bankrupt. We're not going to do that, but we will default because the debt is unsustainable.

This year it is said that we have a debt increase of \$1.6 trillion, but that's not true. If you count what we borrow from the pension funds, the Social Security and highway funds, it's \$2 trillion. But if you include the increase in the entitlement obligation, it's \$5 trillion. So this is a huge, huge problem.

But the argument here is how do you default. And it is said that if we don't raise the debt limit, we're going to default and not send out the checks. I don't believe that for a minute. Somehow or another the checks are going to go out.

But if you really wanted to live within the technicalities of law, there's a very simple thing you could do. We owe the Federal Reserve \$1.6 trillion. Well, that's not a real debt. They bought those Treasury bills with money out of thin air. We could just write that off or quit paying the interest, tide ourselves over and get down to serious business and cut back and live within our means, and that would be a solution.

But to increase the national debt will only encourage another type of default, and that's what we're going through. We're engaged in the most difficult and a very bad way of defaulting, and that is through the destruction of the currency.

Today we have an inflation rate of 9 percent, and that is defaulting. So if a government can default and print money, and if they can get a 50 percent inflation rate over a period of time, they've cut that debt in half. That is the goal; that is what's happening. And that is very, very serious.

Just in these last 3 years in dealing with this crisis, the dollar has been devalued 50 percent against gold. And gold, of course, is the best measurement of the value of a currency. It's been that way for thousands of years, and it cannot be denied because it's economic law. So we are defaulting.

And when the American people go out and start buying goods and services, like they are now, they are recognizing they cost a lot of money. So right now we are in the early stages of

rampant inflation, which means we're going to be hit with higher prices and higher interest rates. That is going to be a tax.

So I see the only solution is to cut spending. Now, the reason we don't cut spending is one side loves entitlements and the other side loves war. And even this token attempt, \$100 billion of cuts when we have this huge, huge deficit will accomplish very little.

But there's no mention of cutting military spending. I don't want to cut defense spending. This military spending doesn't defend us; it makes things worse.

Our problem in this country doesn't come only from the Congress; it comes from the people. The people still have a strong appetite for Big Government programs. They're not willing to cut. They think government can take care of us from cradle to grave and that we can be the policeman of the world.

So some day we, as a country, we, as a people, and we, as a Congress, will have to ask, what should the role of government be? The Founders had a pretty strong suggestion. They wrote a Constitution and said the government should be very limited and the government should be protecting our liberties and providing national defense and a sound currency. We don't do any of that. We've embarked on a course that was destined to end badly, and this is where we are today.

So if we don't understand this, this default will not be because we don't send out the checks. We will send out the checks. It will be defaulted on because people will get their money back, or they will get their Social Security checks, and it won't buy anything. That is much, much worse than facing the fact that we not raise the debt limit and work our way out of this.

That is devastating economically, and it's devastating politically, because we just saw a taste of what happens, how the anger is built when you see other countries in Europe now defaulting and can't pay their bills. So this is more significant than ever because we provide the reserve currency of the world.

THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO VOTE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, the right to vote is a fundamental right which is at the heart of this Nation. This right is under attack.

I came to this floor, after the stolen Presidential elections in Florida and Ohio, to protest the results of these two elections that were filled with voter suppression. Now, years later, 34 States, once again, in our map of shame, require voters to present IDs to vote in Federal, State, and local elections. And in 15 of those States, voters must present a photo ID. Some States require that the ID be government-

issued, mind you, in order to cast a ballot.

However, for any number of reasons, 21 million Americans do not have a government-issued ID required by these voter ID laws; and, thus, the fundamental right of American citizens is taken away. Most State legislatures have enacted or have proposed legislation echoing similar detrimental voting changes. Many of these bills have only one true purpose, and that is the disenfranchisement of specific populations of eligible voters.

In California, unfortunately, there is a voter ID bill pending to suppress voter participation. It would cost, mind you, \$26, \$26 just to get the required documents to qualify for a government ID. This certainly looks like a poll tax to me, which all of us from the South know and remember as a way to keep African Americans from voting.

These voter ID laws have a partisan agenda seeking to deny specific populations of people the opportunity to not to vote, which is really very shameful before they have an opportunity to elect their representatives in government. And we cannot allow this.

So I have to thank Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE, the Congressional Black Caucus, and all of our colleagues for their voices to protect the right for all citizens across this Nation. And I urge the Department of Justice to be vigilant and aggressive in protecting the civil rights and voting rights of Americans.

We go around the world preaching democracy and the importance of voting; yet we are going in the opposite direction in our own country.

Now I would like to yield to the gentleman from Tennessee, Representative COHEN.

Mr. COHEN. Thank you, Ms. LEE. I appreciate your yielding, and I appreciate Congresswoman FUDGE for bringing this issue to the floor.

We previously heard from other Congresspeople and particularly the distinguished Congressman JOHN LEWIS, who was a civil rights hero in the 60s and risked his life, as others did, and gave their lives for the right to vote.

We are experiencing today, after International Nelson Mandela Day, yesterday was Nelson Mandela's 91st birthday. Next month we'll dedicate a memorial to Dr. Martin Luther King on the Mall. When you think about Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela and JOHN LEWIS, you've got to think about voting rights and how far the Nation and the world have come in the last 45 years and how long it took to get there.

And to think that there are impediments being placed in the way of people to vote, whether intentional or not, I believe those impediments are being placed there intentionally to dissuade African Americans and Democratic-leaning groups from voting in the 2012 election, Rovian tactics to stop President Obama from being re-elected and

from the public to pick Democratic Representatives to switch the priorities of this House to those that would be more reflective of the middle class and people who are yearning for opportunity.

□ 1050

But whether they're intentional or not, if they have an effect that is harmful to voting rights, just like other laws, if they have an effect in practice, they are just as harmful and just as wrong as if they were intended. And there is no question that these types of impediments to require people to get voter IDs, when 25 percent of African Americans in this country don't have that type of ID and 8 percent of Caucasians are in the same limitation of not having that type of ID, it's obvious that African Americans and students and others are the ones that are designed to be targeted by these laws.

In my State of Tennessee that passed such a law, to get a photo ID is not easy. I went myself to get a driver's license with a photo ID. It took 1 hour and 20 minutes, constantly standing in line, no place to sit. It was not easy and people will not be able to do it. It will be an impediment to them and limit their opportunity to vote. It's wrong.

I would like to thank Ms. LEE and Congresswoman FUDGE for bringing this to the American public's attention.

Ms. LEE. Thank you.

IT'S TIME TO BALANCE OUR BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, only in Washington can you hear people say that it's irresponsible to balance the budget. I actually heard Democratic leaders on TV this weekend complaining that it would require a supermajority vote to raise taxes on the American people but only a majority to cut spending.

Well, maybe some people have been in Washington too long to realize it, but the American people want to tie Washington's hands and make it easier to cut spending than raise taxes. They want to cap the growth of government. They want to require a balanced budget.

For decades we've heard excuses for why Washington's special and shouldn't be forced to balance its budget. It's time to tell those people that their scare tactics are over. This is a new day. In America the people are sovereign, and today the people demand accountability. They demand a responsible, constrained government. They demand a balanced budget. Clearly Washington is never going to choose to balance its budget; so the people demand that we force it to.

Forty-nine out of fifty States have some form of a balanced budget amendment. If 98 percent of the States know

this is a wise plan, why do Washington politicians fight tooth and nail against it? The answer is plain and simple: power. They will try to scare the American people any way they can to avoid losing power over this massive, bloated bureaucracy. They will say today that they must have this power or else they can't keep taking care of people. They will try to scare seniors to continue their unrestrained power to borrow. They say they will manage their borrowing power wisely; they will restrain themselves.

Well, talk is cheap, and I've heard this same line for decades. What matters are results. How have Washington politicians been managing their borrowing power? One number will tell you: \$14.3 trillion—the amount of our debt today.

A balanced budget amendment is essential because the government has shown time and time again that until we restrain its spending with fiscal handcuffs, the problem will continue. President Obama has only made our spending problem worse by adding \$3.7 trillion to the national debt in just 2 years. The President has spent more money in less time than any other leader in American history.

Last week President Obama told Republicans, "Don't call my bluff." Well, I for one think this game has gone on long enough. The power needs to be restrained. As Lord Acton famously said, "All power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely." Today we fight back against this corruption of absolute power. Today we stand with the American people. Today we vote to return the power to the people.

We invite President Obama to get on board, oppose this runaway spending, and pass a balanced budget. Five years ago he agreed. On March 16, 2006, then-Senator Barack Obama stood in the well of the Senate and said, "The fact that we are here today to debate raising America's debt limit is a sign of leadership failure." He spoke of the "commonsense budgeting principle of balancing expenses and revenues." But then 5 years down the road, unfortunately, President Obama is singing a different tune. He has demanded more borrowing authority with no strings attached. When his own party voted against that proposal a few weeks ago, he started telling us that we must raise the debt ceiling and called our commonsense budgeting reforms "gimmicks" and "radical."

Well, here's what I'm hearing from people in Missouri, my district. That's where common sense is:

Here's Reggie from Adrian, Missouri: "Raising the debt ceiling is like handing five more credit cards to someone who has already maxed out 50 other credit cards and then sitting back and saying you fixed the problem. How dumb would that be?"

Here's from Michael in Sedalia: "Don't give in. As a veteran receiving a pension, I continue to stand behind you and the House leadership in ex-

pecting meaningful spending cuts before raising the debt ceiling without raising taxes. Taxpayers don't like what's going on, and we aren't going to sit by and watch anymore."

Here's from Margaret from Lake Ozark: "A minimum of \$4 billion over 10 years is a drop in the bucket. We also need a constitutional amendment since our leaders can't seem to stop spending and do the right thing. Do the right thing now."

Here's from Judy from Warsaw, Missouri: "The very idea of increasing the debt limit to get us out of trouble is absurd. You cannot borrow your way out of trouble. Deal with it. Cut the pork."

Mark from Camdenton, Missouri: "We have always had to live within our means, and it is time for the government to do the same. We can't have everything we want. The government needs to be reduced. I do not think my children and grandchildren should pay for our lack of responsibility."

Larry from Conway, Missouri: "This is a turning point in history."

I agree. Let's do the right thing. Today let's pass Cut, Cap, and Balance.

VOTER SUPPRESSION AND VOTER ID

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose the epidemic across America of voter suppression and requiring voter ID.

Do you realize that in almost every election in my own State of Texas there has been discrimination, intimidation to voters? Where we used to be able to use a birth certificate, a utility bill, government check, paycheck, and other documents, now we cannot because someone suggests that someone will steal someone's birth certificate to impersonate a voter. I don't think that's right.

What we need now is to eliminate the poll tax of the 21st century. Barbara Jordan recognized that voting is a right, not a privilege, and she stood in the gap to ensure that Texas was covered by the Voting Rights Act. Barbara Jordan would not be here today if we had the voter intimidation that we're seeing growing across America.

Eliminate voter intimidation by elimination of the oppressive voter ID requirement by returning to the standard and acceptable requirements such as birth certificates, current utility bill, government check which provide the protection to protect the vote so that seniors and others will not be stopped from voting.

INTRODUCTION

Good morning Members of Congress, Congressional Black Caucus Members. Today, we address an issue that disturbs the very foundation of our Nation; the right of each and every citizen to participate in electing their representatives in government. Enshrined in our Constitution by our Nation's founders, this fun-

damental right is the linchpin of our democracy.

Unfortunately, the right to vote was not recognized for all people in this country at its inception. Indeed, for the several decades after the signing of the Constitution, the right to vote belonged to white men who owned property alone.

Through a long-fought effort by dedicated activists, courageous legislators and judges, and with the gradual evolution of public sentiment, the voting franchise was extended by law to all white men, non-white men, women, native Americans, and then finally, to all citizens over the age of 18.

However, even though the right to vote was legally recognized for all citizens of age, there have always been sinister efforts to suppress the vote of certain citizens who were guaranteed the right to vote by the Constitution.

Through poll taxes, grandfather clauses, literacy tests, intimidation and outright violence, voter suppression remained an agenda by those who do not believe in the principle of one person, one vote, and who seek to keep certain groups from participating in our democracy.

VOTER ID

Voter photo identification legislation a recent phenomenon and the latest tactic of the voter suppression agenda. Only a decade ago, in any of our 50 states, a voter could set out on election Tuesday and be permitted to vote in his or her respective state without being required to present a photo ID to election officials.

Alarming, since that time, 15 states have adopted photo ID requirements for voting. In fact, at least 34 states have introduced legislation requiring voters to produce photo IDs at the voting booth in this year alone. Seven states, including my home state of Texas, have adopted the strictest form of voter photo ID legislation with the fewest exceptions.

This raises the question: what caused these states to, after more than two centuries of holding elections without photo ID requirements, impose such a burden on voters? Proponents of these laws argue that voter identification fraud is an epidemic in America, while there has been little documented evidence. Voter impersonation fraud occurs when one person votes using the identity of another.

In order to obtain a state-issued photo ID valid under these statutes, states often charge fees. Moreover the documents used for proof of identity in order to obtain photo IDs, such as birth certificates and social security cards, also cost money. When added together, along with transportation costs, the amount of money required to obtain an acceptable form of identification can be substantial for a citizen who lacks the financial means to do so.

Harper v. Virginia Board of Elections, a Supreme Court case decided in 1966, outlawed the Jim Crow requirement that a citizen pay a poll tax in order to be allowed to vote in an election. (Majority Opinion by Justice Douglas)

In its decision, the Court said—quote—"We conclude that a State violates the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment whenever it makes the affluence of the voter or payment of any fee an electoral standard."

However, with voter photo ID requirements, those who would suppress the rights of citizens to vote would have vote a way to implement a backdoor poll tax. Voters without valid, non-expired state or federal government

issued identification documents will be burdened with the expenses of obtaining one of those prescribed forms of ID.

Because of the state's so-called "rational basis" for requiring photo identification in order to vote, Indiana's state photo ID law was upheld by the Supreme Court in *Crawford* in 2008.

The effects of such a ruling are unduly discriminatory and target specific groups of voters: low income voters, racial and ethnic minorities, senior citizens, disabled voters, and college students. I will leave you to guess which party has been behind the concerted and overzealous efforts by state legislatures and governors to push these discriminatory bills.

Eleven percent of the population, or roughly 21 million people, do not have a government-issued photo identification document.

Nationwide, depending on the state, African-Americans are 2 or 3 times as likely as their white counterparts to lack government-issued photo identification. Nearly a fifth of our seniors do not have government-issued photo IDs.

We must remember that voting is a right under our Constitution, not a privilege. We must prevent this effort to turn back the hands of time in order to prevent eligible voters from exercising their Constitutional rights.

TEXAS

Now, I am sad to report that my home state of Texas has been the latest victim of the systematic effort to suppress votes all around America. In late May, Governor Rick Perry signed into law the Texas iteration of voter photo identification legislation, which was based upon the extremely restrictive Indiana photo ID law.

The history and current state of discriminatory voter suppression in Texas is so pervasive that any substantive change to its election law must be submitted by preclearance to the Department of Justice under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act. This makes Texas one of the 9 states in our country that must submit election law alterations, such as photo ID requirements, to the Department of Justice before the changes are permitted to take effect. The law is set to take effect in January next year.

Currently, Texas election law allows voters to use their birth certificate, a current utility bill, a government check, a paycheck, official mail addressed to them, and other documents in lieu of a driver's license issued by the state or a U.S. passport. These documents have long been sufficient in the state of Texas to prove one's identity for the purposes of voting.

However, once the new law takes effect, those alternative forms of identification will be unavailable to citizens of Texas. In fact, Texan voters will be unable to use their birth certificate, which is issued by the State of Texas, in order to vote.

Now, this fact is particularly revealing, especially in light of the purported reason for passing voter photo identification legislation, which is to combat a "supposed" widespread problem of voter impersonation fraud.

If we are to accept their argument that the voter photo ID laws are for the purpose of preventing voter impersonation fraud, then why not continue to allow people to use birth certificates? By banning citizens from using their state-issued birth certificates, we are required to believe the ridiculous and unfounded notion

of people stealing other people's birth certificates in order to show up at an election to vote! Where is the sense in that? I don't know about you, but I have never heard a single case in which a person stole someone else's birth certificate and then showed up at the polls and voted as that person.

No, the fact that birth certificates were removed from Texas election law as a permissible form of identification reveals that voter impersonation fraud is merely a pretextual argument; a guise under which the real purpose of suppressing the votes of certain people can be achieved. That is something for which we cannot stand.

However, while a birth certificate is no longer good enough to prove your identity for the purpose of voting in the State of Texas, "coincidentally", the new law does allow voters to use concealed handgun licenses in order to be permitted to cast their ballots.

There is no doubt that the Texas Voter ID law was specifically crafted with the intent to impose new obligations on the rights of certain Texans to vote, while attempting to preserve the rights of other citizens they believe to be predisposed to voting a certain way.

This is wrong in the State of Texas, and it is wrong in America.

CONCLUSION

In the Harper Supreme Court case, Justice Douglas closed his majority opinion with these words: "Wealth or fee paying has, in our view, no relation to voting qualifications; the right to vote is too precious, too fundamental to be so burdened or conditioned."

Mr. Speaker, may I ask how much time I have remaining, please.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 4 minutes remaining.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I would like to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN).

□ 1100

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I thank the gentlelady, and I would also like to thank Representative FUDGE for her leadership.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlelady may not yield blocks of time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I thank the gentlelady. I would also like to thank Representative FUDGE and the Congressional Black Caucus.

This issue of voter identification and voter suppression goes to the heart of our Constitution in this country. Eleven percent of adults would not have a qualified identification to be able to go and vote; 25 percent of African Americans would not have a qualified ID to be able to vote.

And I have one question: Where's the Tea Party on this issue? Where's the Tea Party with all the placards about freedom and liberty and we're losing our country? We have an issue that is fundamental to what it means to be an American, the right to vote. The question I have is: Where's the Tea Party on the voter suppression issue?

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the gentleman. And I yield now to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CARSON).

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. I thank Congresswoman JACKSON LEE.

Mr. Speaker, voting is a fundamental right of every American. Yet here we are, decades after the civil rights movement, watching as States across this great Nation pass laws that threaten the ability of citizens to participate in our government. This trend is troubling and one that we must closely monitor. My State, the great Hoosier State of Indiana, was the first to impose a strict law requiring voters to present government-issued identification despite having no evidence of actual voter fraud.

As other States follow suit, we risk broadening the threat to the rights of the poor, the elderly, the young, and minority voters. I do not believe the right to vote should hinge on one's ability to obtain specific identification. As a Nation, we should not allow laws that block the rights of vulnerable groups or discriminate. To do so would be to forfeit the fundamental quality of this right and the purpose behind it.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, nothing is more fundamental to our democracy than the right to vote. By stoking the fires of fear and anger, aided and abetted by the U.S. Supreme Court with its Citizens United decision opening the door for unlimited corporate spending on elections, the Republicans seized a death grip on this Congress. Now they want to keep control of Congress so they have embarked on an old strategy, voter suppression.

One of their tactics in making it more difficult for citizens to vote is imposing an unnecessary requirement that voters show a State-issued ID to vote. This is a blatant attempt to keep certain populations from voting, thus ensuring that Republicans maintain control of Congress.

Voter suppression is not right. It is not fair, and it is simply un-American.

And that's real, ya'll.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me thank Congresswoman FUDGE and let me make a commitment to the American people that you can be assured that these Members of Congress, the Congressional Black Caucus, the Tri-Caucus, will stand in the gap to prevent elections from being stolen and your fundamental birthright of voting from being stolen. That is justice, and we will be fighting for justice.

CONEY ISLAND CELEBRATES 125TH YEAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. SCHMIDT) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor something really wonderful in my district, the 125th birthday of America's sixth-oldest amusement park in Cincinnati, Ohio.

What began as a 20-acre apple orchard on the banks of the Ohio River in

1867 was quickly transformed into a private picnic retreat, complete with a bowling alley, a dance hall, and a mule-powered merry-go-round.

In 1886, Parker Grove became known as Ohio Grove, the Coney Island of the West, after being sold to the Ohio Grove Corporation. Modeling itself after Coney Island in New York City, they quickly dropped the name of Ohio Grove and just called it Coney Island and began to add more rides and more attractions. In 1911, the first roller coaster was added, the Dip the Dips, and in 1913 the Dip and Dots was added. But it wasn't until 1924 that the signature attraction of Coney Island was realized when George Schott, one of Cincinnati's greatest philanthropists, purchased with a group of investors Coney Island.

In 1925, they added Sunlite Pool, the world's largest recirculating swimming pool. Mr. Speaker, let me give you the dimensions of this pool because it is bigger than a football field. A football field is 300 feet by 160 feet; this is 200 feet by 401 feet. In addition to being the world's largest recirculating pool, it continues to be the largest flat surface pool in North America, and was the precursor to zero-depth pools in the United States. It went through a lot of trials and tribulations over the next part of the century, but they kept adding new attractions and new rides, including ones that I enjoyed as a child, like the Wildcat and the Shooting Star.

In 1971, a decision was made to take the amusement portion of it and move it to another portion in my district in Kings Island, which made people wonder what would happen to Sunlite Pool. But again, the visionaries realized they had an attraction, they had a water park, and they continued to add dimensions to Sunlite Pool to make it an attraction. In 1986, River Bend was realized by putting in two separate theaters, outdoor theaters, to allow concerts to occur. Today, Coney Island continues to thrive with a small amusement park for children, the Sunlite Pool, and a thriving River Bend.

I would like to say, on a personal note, I remember my mother telling me stories when her mother took her; my mother took me; I took my daughter; and over the Fourth of July break, I was able to take my two grandsons to Coney Island to swim in the pool.

I am so excited that this beautiful attraction has continued to exist for 125 years. I want to celebrate the tenacity of the folks along the way who have continued to invest in this great asset in my district, and I want to wish them a great happy birthday, and I hope Coney Island continues for at least another 125 happy years. Happy birthday, Coney Island.

GETTING AMERICANS OUT OF DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CLARKE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, to the American people, I want to address the debt that is killing jobs in this country and robbing Americans of their financial security. And I also will propose how we get out of that debt, to really create jobs and restore financial security to all Americans.

Now, the Federal debt is important. We have to do everything we can this week and next week to avoid a government default, because if the government defaults on its obligations, at the very least that is going to cause interest rates to rise on the borrowing that the American people hold as debt and that could drive people further into financial distress and into foreclosure and bankruptcy.

But the debt that is crushing the American people is the mortgages, the student loans, the credit cards, that people have to bear. Now I am from Detroit, and jobs are important. In fact, I represent one of the regions of the country that has the highest unemployment rate. But as important as jobs are to the economy, we have got to get Americans out of debt. I know folks who are working right now, they have jobs, they are earning income, but they have no money because their income is going to pay off bills. It's going to creditors. They can't provide for themselves. They can't provide for their families. They can't provide security for the future because they are in debt. And this American personal debt is also costing this U.S. economy jobs because when people don't have money to save, money to invest, they can't really spend it on businesses that could hire more people and create more jobs.

My point is this, and I am speaking to a few of the Members of Congress who are here right now, but more importantly, I am speaking to you, the American people, because maybe you can help me drive this Congress to address the real debt that is threatening this democracy and our economy.

□ 1110

This country's economy will not rebound strongly, and we will not easily get out of this recession as long as Americans are underwater on their mortgages, defaulting on student loans, and maxing out on their credit cards. If we want to create jobs, jobs that will truly be sustainable and help provide families with real financial security, this Congress must realize that when the American people are in debt, so is this country.

So here's what I'm urging today. I am going to have a resolution I'm going to put forth, that as we work to prevent a government default on its obligations, that we also have to work to make sure that Americans don't further default on their debt. So I am asking, in as strong as possible a way as I can, for this Congress, on certain loan obligations, to immediately work to cut mortgages down to the value of your home, to forgive student loans,

because the most powerful way that we can restore our economic strength, to create jobs that are sustainable, is to help Americans get out of debt.

Now Congress has an obligation to do so because we changed the rules over the past decade or so to put Americans in all this debt. But just as Congress has an obligation to act, I've got to talk to you, the American people. You've got to act, too. You've got to take responsibility. You want this government to get out of debt, then you get out of debt personally. Stop the spending. Stop the borrowing. Stop overconsumption, buying things that you don't need with money that you don't have. That's robbing you and your family of a future. It's robbing this country out of jobs.

So I am going to ask every American right now, get out your credit cards, cut them up, free yourselves. Free yourselves. Don't count on this Congress to help you. This Congress already voted to end Medicare. They're flirting with disaster on this debt right now.

I'm asking Americans, take control of your financial future, get out of debt, and let's demand that this Congress help you get out of debt.

CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE ACT IS A PLAN THAT CAN WORK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today the House is going to debate a bill that holds the potential to move us away from a debt crisis and toward prosperity. I want to associate myself with the comments that were made by our colleague the gentlelady from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) a couple of speakers ago when she talked about how our colleagues on the other side of the aisle say that it is irresponsible to amend the Constitution in order to require the Congress to balance the budget.

Yesterday in the Rules Committee, we heard from the gentleman from Maryland who talked about how we're twisting the Constitution to put in a limit on how we could cut taxes, raise taxes, into the Constitution, that how, by putting a two-thirds vote and restrictions into the Constitution, we're damaging the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth. Congresses in the past have proven that they don't have the restraint that's necessary to keep our spending under control. We need a constitutional amendment in order to do that.

They did admit yesterday that we are paying the credit card from the past, and I want to point out that under President Obama, the average annual deficits that were in existence under President Bush became monthly deficits under President Obama. Since 2½ years ago, the national debt has increased by \$3.7 trillion.

That's why we need to cut spending, Mr. Speaker. We need to cut our spending. We need to cap our spending at no more than 20 percent of the GDP. That's what it was traditionally. It has now eased up to 23 percent. We have to take it back down.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to point out, as my colleague from Missouri said, that when President Obama was Senator Obama, he spoke on the Senate floor and voted against raising the debt limit, saying that it was a failure of leadership. He doesn't admit that now, that it's a failure of leadership. He doesn't even admit that he's part of the problem. And part of the problem is that he has no plan. When we asked yesterday in Rules, "Where's the President's plan?" we were told it was in his speech at George Washington University. Well, even his own staff people, even his own appointees, say they can't score a speech.

Republicans have a plan, and our plan is to cut, cap, and balance. We need a constitutional amendment, Mr. Speaker, in order to force the Congress to do its job. Past Congresses, as it has been shown, couldn't do it. We're willing to do that. There is no leadership on the part of the Democrats. The budget that the President presented in February was voted down, 97-0, in the Senate. Even his own party will not support him.

And what about all these corporate loopholes that the President and our colleagues keep talking about? The President talks about these corporate jets, but he doesn't admit the fact that the loopholes he's talking about, which he calls subsidies, that loophole was in the stimulus that he forced through this Congress, that no Republican voted for. So the corporate loophole for the jets is one the President put into place, and now he's condemning it.

Mr. Speaker, we need our President and our colleagues on the other side of the aisle to fess up to the fact that they've created this problem, they have no plan to solve it, and all they want to do is throw barbs at the Republicans who are showing the courage to do something about this serious debt crisis that we face in this country.

VOTER SUPPRESSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATERS. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

In 2011, we see that voter suppression is real and rearing its ugly head in too many Republican-led legislatures across this country. With only 15 months left before the next Presidential election, Republicans are rewriting voting laws to require photo identification at the polls, reduce the number of days of early voting, and to enhance voting restrictions against felons and out-of-state students.

Since January, voter ID laws have passed in Florida, Wisconsin, South

Carolina, Alabama, Texas, Kansas, and Tennessee. Governor Scott Walker of Wisconsin and Governor Rick Perry of Texas both signed laws this year that would require each voter to show an official, valid photo ID to cast a ballot, despite the fact that studies show up to 11 percent of eligible voters nationwide don't have government-issued IDs.

In Florida, Governor Rick Scott signed a bill to tighten restrictions on third-party voter organizations and shorten the number of early voting days. Governor Scott also helped to pass a ban on felon voting rights, forcing nonviolent offenders to wait 5 years after completing their sentences to apply to have their rights restored.

The Florida legislature also passed new laws that makes it tougher for get-out-the-vote groups to register new voters and reduces the number of early voting days from 14 to 8.

Make no mistake: We've been down this road before with Jim Crow laws. These smoke-and-mirror policies are poll taxes and literacy tests by another name. Communities must be alert and aware of these new laws. We will not allow the work, sacrifice and death of our forefathers and civil rights leaders to have been in vain. We are prepared for this fight, and fight we will.

The new voter ID laws and other restrictions have the potential to disenfranchise millions of eligible voters. Minorities, poor people, seniors, and students are among those that will be impacted the most.

□ 1120

The Justice Department must get involved. They must make sure that these laws that we have fought so hard for on voting rights are not undermined.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, when I became a Member of Congress, I swore an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America. And I rise today to affirm that commitment by speaking out against State efforts to undermine the basic right to vote—a right that has been affirmed by no less than three amendments to the Constitution: the Voting Rights Act; over 150 years of litigation, blood, sweat, tears, and lies. No right under the Constitution has been more defended by the American people. Yet Wisconsin just passed a very restrictive voter ID, photo ID card in order to vote.

I can remember when then-Representative Walker and I, the Governor of Wisconsin, debated this issue. And he, like so many other people, said, Well, what's the big deal? What's wrong with having a photo ID? You need a photo ID to go to Blockbuster's and get a video. You need a photo ID to drive. You need a photo ID to get medicine. Well, getting a video from Blockbuster's is not a right. The right to vote is a very, very important badge of democracy in this country. We need a

very high bar before we make it more difficult to exercise our rights as U.S. citizens.

And what's the bar that Wisconsin uses to justify its law? The Wisconsin Attorney General's office found in the 2-year Election Fraud Task Force investigation that there were 20 instances of possible voter fraud out of 3 million votes cast. That's seven-thousandths of 1 percent. And a photo ID would not have prevented any of these discrepancies.

People of color are singled out for disenfranchisement when you consider in Wisconsin that 55 percent of African American women, 49 percent of African American men, 59 per of Latinas, 46 percent of Latinos don't have this kind of ID. And when you consider the 18- to 24-year-old group, 78 percent of African American males don't have this ID and 66 percent of African American women don't have the ID. I wonder who they're trying to disenfranchise.

We implore the Department of Justice to intervene and prevent these extremely transparent efforts to burden likely Democratic voters at the polls.

IN SUPPORT OF THE CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. I rise today in support of the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle here to support the bill when it comes to the floor later today. This legislation not only provides a workable framework to avert an economically dangerous default on our obligations but it also sets the stage for real structural changes to the way the Federal Government spends our tax dollars, something that the President has yet to propose.

Lately, there have been stories and speculation about the major credit rating agencies such as Moody's and Standard and Poor's threatening to downgrade America's creditworthiness should we fail to raise the statutory debt ceiling. These ratings are more than letters on paper. They affect Americans in all walks of life and in very real ways. A downgrade of our Nation's credit rating would make mortgages more expensive, make it more difficult to get a loan for a car, and could make student loans unaffordable.

While default would likely ensure downgrade, a debt ceiling increase is no longer alone sufficient to ensure our AAA credit rating. Moody's has warned that the outlook to our bond rating would remain negative should any plan going forward not include long-term deficit reduction. It is not enough to simply raise the limit on the credit card and continue making the minimum monthly payments. We must begin to pay down our debt.

One need look no further than Greece and Portugal as examples of governments which have failed to address

their debt crises in time to avoid brutal austerity measures which have caused widespread civil disorder in those countries. The politicians in Greece and Portugal thought they could avoid making the tough decisions that were clearly laid out before them. They thought they could make it through just one more quarter or just past one more legislative session, or maybe they could just buy themselves enough time to let the next guys handle it. We cannot continue to operate under the same delusions.

The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act avoids a crippling default and sets us on a path to fiscal solvency by making real spending cuts now, placing statutory limits on spending, and sending a balanced budget amendment to the States, a measure that so many of us have so consistently supported. These decisions, Mr. Speaker, will not be easy. No change ever is. As these debates have gone on for the past several months, I have been reminded of Thomas Paine when he wrote: "If there must be trouble, let it be in my day, that my children may have peace." We need to decide what our legacy to our children and their children will be—a mountain of debt or a sound government that lives within its means.

GETTING A HANDLE ON DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARTER. Six months ago, a small businessman was called into a financial lending institution and asked to come in and talk to the officer in charge. He went into that office and the officer in charge told him, You have been a customer of this organization for quite a few years and we have constantly been giving you a line of credit every summer to continue your operation for the next year.

This year our examiners have noted for us and also through our board of directors we've examined your operation and your borrowing patterns. Here's what we've discovered: We've discovered that where you had a going facility and you were doing well and you were employing people and things were going well, we've started to see a trend in your business to where you are increasing your debt more and more and more. Not only were you spending our line of credit that this bank lent to you to continue your operations throughout the year, but outside of that line of credit, you were accumulating many, many, many credit cards. And now at this point in time, it is our understanding and the way we look at it is not only are you using our line of credit that we gave you but you also have maxed out every credit card you have got, and, quite honestly, we are amazed at the number of credit cards you actually have. We didn't really know anybody could have that many credit cards.

So we're just going to warn you, if you don't change the direction of the

way you're operating your business, we very clearly believe that your business is going to go bankrupt. But even more importantly to this institution, this lending institution, we're concerned about the fact that our institution is going to be placed in a very tenuous position on any loans that we make to you; therefore, our position right now is that when you come to us next August, we're not going to lend you the money for your line of credit.

Yesterday, this same businessman walked into that same lending institution and said, My accountant and I have done the same analysis that you've done on the situation of our operation. We've looked at it, and we actually agree that we have gone in the wrong direction now for many, many years and we have spent more than we've made for many, many years. And we, quite frankly, got away from doing the needs of our company to doing the wants of our company.

Therefore, we are seriously in debt. I want to start off by saying I recognize that. And when you gave us our wake-up call, we sat down and analyzed what we could do to show you that we are changing the direction of our business. And here's what we propose to you:

□ 1130

First, we propose to you that, this year, here are the reductions we're going to make on our credit cards, and here are the places where we're going to cut back on the way we spend. That's for this year.

Now, we've also analyzed every section in the departments of our business, and we have determined that we're way over what we really need to function as a prosperous business, so we're going to offer to you that our business plan over the next 10 years is to put a ceiling on every department and every part of our business operation so that we will never rise above that ceiling; therefore, we will be continually reducing the level of our spending over the next 10 years.

Then, finally, we are making a pledge to you of everything not encumbered in our business that we will balance our budget, that we will prepare a budget and balance that budget every year and that, if at any time it doesn't, then immediately you will call every note we have.

This is a parable, but it's also the reality in the United States of America today for everybody but the Federal Government. That's why, today, the Republicans will offer that same plan of Cut, Cap, and Balance.

CUT SPENDING, CAP SPENDING, AND BALANCE THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHILLING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHILLING. Mr. Speaker, today we have an opportunity to take action and promote certainty in both our economy and the markets by passing

H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act of 2012.

Moody's and Standard & Poor's have warned the United States that our AAA credit rating is at risk if President Obama does not raise the debt ceiling by August 2. By passing Cut, Cap, and Balance, we can respond with confidence, create economic certainty, get our spending under control, and put America back to work.

Mr. Speaker, 6½ months ago, I left life as a small business man, and have had the honor of representing the constituents of the 17th Congressional District of Illinois. I come to the floor this morning with some observations about where we've made progress and where we've met frustration. During this time, we have seen tangible results.

This Congress repealed the onerous 1099 tax provision, which prevents our job creators from being bogged down in a nightmare of paperwork. This Congress cleaned up the mess left by last year's Congress by cutting billions in spending. This House has cut its own office budgets by 5 percent, saving taxpayers \$35 million, and later this week, we'll cut our office budgets by another 6.4 percent. Most importantly, this House of Representatives fulfilled its responsibility by passing a budget. This budget cuts trillions of dollars in spending, but more importantly, it puts forth a plan to save Medicare instead of letting it go insolvent.

As a new Member of this House, there has also been frustration with the process. Our national debt is \$14.3 trillion. Each child born today, including my new granddaughter, Reagan, already owes \$46,000 as their share of the national debt. Yet there are some Members of this body—97 to be exact—who wanted to give President Obama the authority to raise the debt limit by \$2.4 trillion with no questions asked.

Congress has raised the debt ceiling 51 times since 1978, and look where we are today. How can we see these next 2 weeks as anything but an opportunity to put our great country on a better fiscal path?

I did not come here to get my name on a wall plaque. I came here so that when my newly born granddaughter, Reagan, asks me, "Grandpa, what did you do to help fix this country?" I'll be able to tell her that I was part of a class that changed the focus of this town from bloated spending to spending cuts. I'll be able to tell her that, today, we took a vote on legislation that does three very important things:

It cuts spending. It promotes spending caps to 19.9 percent of GDP by 2021. It makes the raising of the debt ceiling contingent upon a balanced budget amendment.

We are only 2 weeks away from the deadline set by Mr. Geithner, but we've seen no plan from this administration or the Democrats in the House. Let me repeat that we have seen no plan from the administration or the Democrats in this House. We all know it's easier to criticize than to offer a plan of your

own. Now, before this plan to cut our spending and balance our budget is demagogued, let me tell you exactly how this thing works:

This plan makes no changes to Social Security and Medicare. This plan makes no changes to the veterans' spending. This plan will cut spending by \$111 billion in fiscal year 2012.

We must use this debate as an opportunity to bring real change to Washington and to start paying down our debt. If you believe that cutting spending and providing a way forward for a balanced budget are commonsense ideas, vote for this legislation.

CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE WASHINGTON'S CHECKBOOK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HECK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HECK. Mr. Speaker, I am here to share a short letter I received from one of my constituents who used to own a small business. His name is Steve, and his letter eloquently addresses the issue we are discussing today.

Steve wrote: "I know it is a very contentious time in Washington. The 2008 election led me to sell my business because I saw an assault on the small business owner. My peers continue to ask me how I anticipated our current situation.

"First, it was the mandated health insurance, then more government regulation and regulators, and now it is the assault on my earnings that I worked hard for over the last 40 years.

"The President and his Progressive friends will not be satisfied until they kill what reward for risk incentive is left.

"Equal wealth for everyone is not guaranteed in our Constitution.

"The reward for risk is what made this country what it is today.

"I ask that you hold the line even if it means losing the next election."

I came to Congress to get Nevada's economy back on track, and the only way to do that is by listening to our job creators—by listening to their concerns and then addressing those very concerns. When I talk with Nevada's small business owners, they feel the same way Steve does. They say the reason they're not creating jobs is due to too many harmful regulations, too many taxes and too much government spending.

We are in a fiscal crisis, and it is killing our job creators' very ability to create jobs. In all of my conversations with Nevada business owners, the one thing—the one thing—I've never heard them say is, "Do you know what would help me create more jobs? A tax increase."

I urge Nevadans and my colleagues not to listen to the President's false choice—the idea that we can fix government's fiscal problems by merely closing loopholes and reining in subsidies. Now, let me be clear. I support closing loopholes and subsidies because

we need to level the playing field, but that won't by itself solve the problem, because even if we close the loopholes and rein in the subsidies, the government will still have a spending problem, and it will only be a matter of time before another tax increase is proposed.

Past all of the talking points and hyperbole, the President's real choice is about the tax burden families and businesses face in Nevada and across the country. Will that burden be lower or higher? I am fighting to make sure it's lower. Our job creators, like Steve, realize this. Why doesn't Congress? Forty-nine of 50 States balance their budgets. Why doesn't Congress? Nevada families live within their means. Why doesn't Congress?

Just because there are checks in the checkbook doesn't mean there is money in the checking account. The Cut, Cap, and Balance proposal is a thoughtful solution to solving the government's spending problem that protects the promise of Social Security and Medicare for seniors and veterans' benefits to our brave men and women who have fought to protect our freedoms. It will cut \$5.8 trillion over the next decade and give our job creators confidence that we are serious about getting this economy back on track.

I urge my colleagues to support the Cut, Cap, and Balance bill and show that we are serious about balancing Washington's checkbook.

□ 1140

THE DEBT CEILING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, as Americans, we face a challenge. The question yet to be answered is: Will we rise to be able to meet that challenge?

We can often hear in the debate on this floor something that happens at every Super Bowl at half time. It's called "kick, pass, and punt." We can kick each other around, we can pass on this problem in addressing it today, and we can punt to the next generation. But I think far more is expected of us.

The people who elected us, the people who sent us to this office, are seeking solutions and leadership to be able to deal with the true challenges that we all face at home.

Last night around dinner tables across our country, moms and dads were going over the family budget looking at how much it cost to fill up that gas tank, how they're going to meet that family budget to be able to put food on the table, to be able to keep a roof over their heads. They're spending within their means.

Forty-nine of our 50 States have one form or another of a balanced budget requirement meaning that, as States, they have to be able to live within their means. Surprisingly, only here in

Washington, D.C., in our Nation's capital, do we think there is this inexhaustible resource called the American taxpayers' hip pocket to be able to draw from so that government can grow. The constant argument, my friends, is government needs it more than the people at home. I don't think so. Come and walk my district. Look in the eyes of the people right now that are struggling to be able to keep that roof over the top of their heads.

We have that economic challenge. We face a debt in this country of \$14.4 trillion. Now, I don't know about you. I'm a small businessman. It's hard really to get your arms around just what is a million dollars, let alone a trillion dollars.

Well, if you're a basketball fan, you may have paid a little attention to this last season. LeBron James, arguably one of the best basketball players in the entire country, being paid \$40 million a year to be able to play basketball, well, if he wants to earn just \$1 trillion, we have to wish him very good health. He'll have to play basketball for 25,000 years to earn just \$1 trillion.

We've stacked up over \$14.4 trillion. The President has asked for a blank check to increase the debt of this country an additional 2 trillion-plus dollars.

Is the time now for fiscal responsibility in Washington? It is. We have to rise to be able to meet that challenge. Cut, cap, and balance, is that unreasonable? We can demonize it. We can say that Washington is above the rules of every American and the rules they have to be able to live with, or we can look to the people who we sent to Washington to stand up for us to live under the same constraints that we do in our individual lives.

If we've spent more than we've taken in, we have to be able to find ways to be able to cut back. We then also have to have that alternative to be able to restrain that spending and then to be able to balance the budget.

Unfortunately, yesterday the President said that it was going to be dead on arrival. I hope that our American citizenry will rise to this challenge. I have great hope that this Chamber will pass Cut, Cap, and Balance. But we need to let the Senate of the United States and the President of the United States know that we're going to be holding them accountable. Our future truly depends on it.

This is our time. This is our challenge. This is truly our opportunity. Let's put aside what is often referred to as just politics as usual. This is not a Democratic issue. This is not a Republican issue. This is an American issue.

I hope that our Members will join with me in seeking real solutions to real problems to deal with it so that the American people can look to a brighter future.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair

declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 45 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Dear God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask Your special blessing upon the Members of this people's House. They face difficult decisions in difficult times, with many forces and interests demanding their attention.

Give them generosity to enter into their work. May they serve You in the work they do, as You deserve; give of themselves and not count the cost; fight for what is best for our Nation and not count the wounds; toil until their work is done and not seek to rest; and labor without seeking any reward, other than knowing they are doing Your will and serving the people of this great Nation.

Bless them, O God, and be with them and with us all this day and every day to come. May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLEAVER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CLEAVER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE (H. DOC. NO. 112-44)

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives; which was read and, together with the accompanying document, referred to the Committee on House Administration and ordered to be printed:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, July 19, 2011.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: I have received the following correspondence regarding the election of Janice Hahn to fill the vacancy of the 36th congressional district for the state of California. The correspondent was not a candidate for office and affirms that he is not eligible to contest the election under the law. As such, I forward the correspondence to the House for its disposal.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk.

Enclosure.

JULY 18, 2011.

Hon. KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MS. HAAS, I am protesting the election of Janice Hahn in the July 12, 2011 Special Election to fill the vacancy for the Thirty-Sixth Congressional District of California.

As I was not a candidate for this election, I am not eligible to challenge the election under the preferred method specified by the Federal Contested Elections Act. I am, however, eligible to protest the election according to Chapter 9 of Volume 2 of Deschler's Precedents of the United States House of Representatives which provides for a protest filed by "any other person" to be referred to the Committee on House Administration for investigation.

The House of Representatives has the constitutional authority to determine if a Member-elect is "duly elected." See *Powell v. McCormack* (1969). Further, the U.S. Supreme Court made it clear that the House of Representatives is the final authority to make "an unconditional and final judgment" in determining questions regarding the elections of Members of that body, and that the courts have no role in reviewing any such determination. See *Roudebush v. Hartke* (1972).

The election referenced above was not a valid election because it violated Article 1, Section 4, clause 1 of the Constitution:

"The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of choosing Senators."

The Manner of holding this special election was not prescribed by the California State Legislature, but rather through a ballot process which amended the State Constitution. Senate Bill 6 approved a ballot measure to be placed for consideration before the people of the State of California. This action did not prescribe the manner of elections. The people of the California, and not the legislature thereof, then prescribed the manner of holding elections by voting in favor of Proposition 14, which institutes a "top two primary system" within the California State Constitution. The merits and shortcomings of this particular system are irrelevant to

the constitutional question being raised. The process by which this system was prescribed is a direct violation of both the letter and the spirit of the U.S. Constitution.

Further, since Proposition 14 instituted the election process within the state constitution, the state legislature is not able to specify a different process, should it so choose. This is also a direct violation of both the letter and the spirit of the U.S. Constitution. Finally, choosing the manner of holding elections is not a duty that can be delegated directly to the legislature. Such delegation would violate both the previously mentioned clause as well as Article 4, Section 4 of the Constitution:

"The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion; and on Application of the Legislature, or of the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened), against domestic Violence."

As such, any election held under this process, which was not prescribed by the legislature of California, is not valid and the office should remain unfilled until such time as a constitutional election can take place.

Respectfully,

TONY DETORA.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

AMERICA'S JOBLESSNESS

(Mr. ROGERS of Alabama asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, this country has a real problem with jobs, or the lack of jobs, and our economy. It's what we in the Congress need to be debating solutions to resolve. Instead, we're having to argue with the President about our debt ceiling.

The President is refusing to cut spending that every American knows we have to do unless he gets tax increases. And he's threatening to withhold Social Security checks from seniors to get his way. I think that's shameful, and he's going to have to answer for that one day. But right now, we've got a solution in the House, the Republicans do, called Cut, Cap, and Balance, that will limit spending to a level that we can afford in a responsible way without new taxes.

We're urging the President to do something big. He says he wants to do something big about our debt problem. This is the solution. We urge him to work with us and not demand new taxes. And once he will do that, we can turn to some meaningful things that will help improve the job situation, which, by the way, is at 9.2 percent unemployment and going in the wrong direction. We can do some things, like getting the regulators off our community banks so that small businesses can have access to capital, and shrinking the size of EPA and OSHA and NLRB, which are bloated in their infrastructure and are just stifling jobs in America. We have a lot of things we can do. But first, we've got to get our spending under control.

I urge my colleagues to vote for Cut, Cap, and Balance.

CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the drastic cuts to Social Security, Medicare, and other crucial Federal programs that passage of the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act would force upon the American people. The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act takes our Nation closer to default by holding the debt ceiling hostage until Congress passes a constitutional amendment to limit total Federal spending to 18 percent of our gross domestic product.

The last time Federal spending was below 18 percent of the gross domestic product was 1966, when the median age was nearly 8 years younger and the average cost of health care was one-fifth of what it is today. Even under President Ronald Reagan, Federal spending averaged over 22 percent of gross national product. Though this legislation may claim to exempt many Federal programs from its spending limitations, there is almost no possible way to revert Federal spending back to 1960s levels without sharp cuts to every program, including Social Security and Medicare. Even the FY 2012 budget that the House Republican majority passed in April, which would dismantle Medicare as we know it, allowed for Federal spending to be above 20 percent of the gross domestic product.

I urge my colleagues on both sides to vote to support America's retirees, veterans, and children and oppose this dangerous legislation.

CONTROL THE ATF, NOT GUNS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, under the ATF's Operation Fast and Furious, straw purchasers bought and sold guns to Mexican drug cartels while the ATF watched. It is hard to understand why the ATF is complicit in the drug smuggling business. Maybe the government hoped it would lead to more gun control, but unfortunately, it led to murder.

Border Patrol agent Brian Terry and ICE agent Jaime Zapata were killed by guns that were trafficked into Mexico under this operation. Rather than investigate this ill-conceived and dangerous operation, the Federal Government is doing what it does best, creating gun control regulations to solve a problem it created. The President's new discriminatory Executive order requires border States to report purchases of two or more rifles to the ATF, the very agency that purposely and incompetently let over 2,000 guns go to Mexico, 1,400 of which are still

missing. This administration ignores the obvious. It's not the gun; it's the shooter. And in this case, it's the Federal Government's recklessness and stupidity that led to at least two murders. It's time to control the ATF, not guns.

And that's just the way it is.

COMMEMORATING COLOMBIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the rich history of Colombia as we mark Colombian Independence Day on July 20. We honor the people of Colombia and those individuals of proud Colombian descent who are celebrating more than 200 years of independence.

Colombians have been immigrating to Rhode Island for the past 50 years, and I would like to thank them for their great contributions to our State. Simon Bolivar led the people of Colombia in the first raising of their flag, signifying their sovereignty and the birth of one of the most culturally rich nations in all of Latin America. Today we celebrate a great country, its people, their traditions, and the mark they have made on cities like Central Falls, Providence, and Pawtucket, Rhode Island, and others, adding to the vibrancy of these communities. For that alone, I am proud to honor your heritage and the difference you have made.

And as I pay tribute to the people of the great Nation of Colombia, I also want to, again, extend my thoughts and sympathies to Colombians everywhere for the suffering that continues to occur because of the floods in your country. May we continue to be inspired to support the people of Colombia through this difficult time as we celebrate Colombian Independence Day and honor the enormous contributions of Colombian Americans.

□ 1210

CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today we will have the opportunity to vote for a solution on the impending debt ceiling issue in Washington. The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act of 2011 will cut \$111 billion of spending next year; it will cap the total Federal spending for the next 10 years; and, finally, it will require the passage of a balanced budget amendment before raising the national debt limit.

This year the Federal Government will spend twice the amount it spent just 10 years ago. The government has a spending problem. It is not a lack of revenue, and it must be addressed to protect senior citizens.

Where are the liberals' plans? It's been over 800 days since the liberals passed a budget in the Senate.

The President's failed plan does not cut spending. Instead, it just raises taxes in a recession, killing jobs.

I hope both parties can come together to enact the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act, which I am grateful to have cosponsored to benefit the young people of our country.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

WHERE ARE THE JOBS?

(Mr. BACA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, last year my Republican colleagues ran their campaign on the slogan: "Where are the jobs?" It's been 28 weeks since the Republicans took control of the House, and the question still remains: Where are the jobs?

We all know that the Bush tax for the wealthy failed to create new jobs. They fooled the public once. It ain't going to happen again.

Now, instead of working to create jobs, Republicans are holding our country hostage, taking the debt limit talks to the brink.

Under the Republican budget proposal, seniors will lose guaranteed medical benefits, have their out-of-pocket medical expenses double. The Republican plan will reopen the Medicare doughnut hole area, costing 4 million seniors an additional \$2.2 billion. It's wrong to make our seniors suffer to give a tax break to the ultrarich and corporations that ship jobs overseas.

No new taxes, no new jobs. No taxes, no jobs. No taxes, no jobs.

Let's put together a plan that lowers our deficit without doing it on the backs of our seniors and the middle class.

CO-OP DEFAULTS

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, would you invest in a company if there were a 40 percent chance that you would lose all of your money? That doesn't sound like much of an investment. Most people would call that gambling. But that is exactly what the Federal Government is about to do in setting up the new ObamaCare health care co-ops.

The Department of HHS will loan more than \$4 billion in the coming years as an attempt to set up at least one co-op in each State. They project that 40 percent of the loans given out to plan the co-ops will go into default. 35 percent of the loans to keep the co-ops solvent are also projected to go into default. This could add up to billions of dollars lost.

We raised taxes by more than \$1 trillion so that we could burn it away on

projects with an extremely high rate of failure. When we take money away from the private sector and then burn it away on government projects, the result is going to be lost jobs and a struggling economy.

We need jobs, not more failed government programs.

MEAN-SPIRITED STINGERS

(Mr. CLEAVER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, this is a very sad time for me and, I hope, for others. Unemployment is at 9.2 percent. For African Americans, it's at 16.2. If you use the Labor Department's U6 standards, it's almost 30 percent. And all we want to do here is argue—argue.

These are real human beings who are out here struggling. I saw a lady the other day working at a hotel, cleaning up, with a college degree from Howard University. She can't get a job.

And so what are we going to do in Congress? While Congress likes to bash, the jobless need cash.

What do we need to do to get things going? Well, we need to stop being so mean. Mean, that's what we are down here.

A bumblebee cannot sting and make honey at the same time. And what we have decided to be in Congress is a big group of 435 stingers.

SEPARATING WANTS FROM NEEDS

(Mr. LANDRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANDRY. Mr. Speaker, I'm new to Washington; so sometimes I don't understand why this town makes everything so hard.

For decades now, this town has squandered the wealth of the people of the United States. And, yes, it is the people's money, not Washington's.

Our spending is 24 percent of our economy. Our revenue is 15 percent. And 24 is larger than 15. What we spend is more than we take in. We have a spending problem here.

Mr. President, stop the class warfare and end the threats to our seniors. You know they are the most vulnerable, and it is they who have carried the burden of this government's reckless spending for decades.

Since you refuse to lead with a plan, we have. I'm sorry you don't like our plan, but you don't have a plan or have not put a plan forward.

We must get America's fiscal house in order. To do so will require fiscal discipline and sacrifices. We must separate our wants from our needs. This bill forces us to do that.

It is the responsible thing to do, and it is the only way to guarantee the future solvency of the United States and the protection of our citizens from an out-of-control government.

RECOGNITION OF THE U.S. WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM

(Ms. HOCHUL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. HOCHUL. Mr. Speaker, while we are preoccupied with the weighty issues of the day, we also need to take a moment to acknowledge what is also good.

Today I'd like to recognize an exceptionally strong and inspiring group of women, the United States women's soccer team. Despite fierce competition, these women overcame insurmountable odds and made it through five rounds of play, doing us all proud.

What is most exciting to me is that two of our strongest players hail from western New York: Abby Wambach, born and raised in Rochester; and Alex Morgan, who currently plays for the Western New York Flash. These two women gave the United States our goals, proving to be tremendous athletes that deserve our recognition. So thanks to Abby and Alex and the entire team for making all western New Yorkers and America proud. And I would like to note that they work together as a team on behalf of America.

I think there are some lessons that we should take from these inspiring women, and I'd be very proud to welcome them to our Capitol and give them a tour of this distinguished body.

SUPPORT THE CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE ACT

(Mr. WALBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, we received word yesterday that the President has threatened to veto the bill we will consider later today, H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act. As a co-sponsor of this bill, I can't disagree more.

We have a spending problem, not a revenue problem. For the President to threaten to veto a serious proposal that will put our country back on the path to fiscal responsibility demonstrates his stubborn insistence on continuing reckless spending and debt. If the President wants to continue to disregard the voice of the people, then he will veto this bill, despite never presenting a plan of his own.

The President will do what he chooses to do, but I will do what the people and our Nation's future demand. Unless we want to face even longer-term economic difficulties, the President should reconsider his position and support this plan that cuts spending and encourages job growth.

BACK TO 1966

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, we've heard at rallies all across the country

over the last couple of years: We want to take our country back. Well, today, when we're voting on the so-called Cut, Cap, and Balance Act, we now know where they want to take our country back to—1966. Those are the spending levels that would be required if we pass Cut, Cap, and Balance.

Now, there were a lot of cool things about 1966. Gas was 25 cents a gallon. The average car cost about \$3,400, a new car. A home was \$20,000, and eggs were 55 cents a dozen. It would be nice if we could pay those prices again. It would be nice if our seniors who are cared for by doctors and hospitals could rely on that kind of 1966 pricing. Unfortunately, they can't.

So what cut, cap, and balance would really mean is slash, shred, and punish. Slash the budget, shred the safety net, and punish the American citizens who can least afford it, all while protecting the wealthiest, most successful and the most specially treated people in this country—our millionaires, billionaires, oil companies, and giant corporations.

I urge all of our colleagues to reject the reckless Republican agenda known as "cut, cap, and balance."

□ 1220

FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS

(Mr. CANSECO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CANSECO. Mr. Speaker, as I talk to residents of the 23rd Congressional District of Texas that I have the privilege to represent, the top concern about which I hear is the need to create jobs.

For 2 years, President Obama and Washington liberals attempted to spend and borrow our way to a better economy. It simply didn't work. Trillions of dollars later, all we have is a national debt that every American household has over \$120,000 of its share, and 29 straight months of unemployment at 8 percent or higher, the longest streak since the Great Depression.

There's another way to create jobs: Pass the pending free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea. According to the Business Roundtable, these three agreements alone will create more than 250,000 jobs. At a time when over 14 million Americans are unemployed, it's time to put the politics aside and pass these three job-creating agreements. The time has come to pass the Colombia, Panama, and South Korea Free Trade Agreements.

RYAN BUDGET WITH LIPSTICK IS COMING TO THE HOUSE TODAY

(Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Cut, Cap, and Balance is not a jobs bill; it's a job-killing bill. It's a new way of trying to

ramrod the Ryan budget proposal down our throats. It's the Ryan budget with lipstick, and it's really just slash-and-burn politics with a new face.

Today, the Republicans will vote unanimously for this draconian slash-and-burn Ryan budget plan that they now call "Cut, Cap, and Balance." For the third time, the Republicans will vote unanimously to cut Medicare and change Social Security to a voucher program that puts our seniors at the mercy of the for-profit insurance companies. And that's real.

We need jobs and economic growth, not cut, cap and balance, which is, again, just slash-and-burn politics, the Ryan budget proposal with lipstick. And that's the real deal. That's realer than "Real Deal Holyfield."

MR. PRESIDENT, IT'S TIME FOR A PLAN

(Mr. AUSTRIA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. AUSTRIA. Mr. Speaker, our Nation is facing a debt crisis that threatens our economy, our national security, and our children's future.

This administration continues to borrow and spend money we don't have. They just don't get it. Our debt crisis is not because of taxing too little, but a result of Washington spending too much and pushing the bill to the American people, both now and for future generations. Our children will owe approximately \$45,000 to our creditors, and that's unacceptable.

I know folks back home in Ohio and across this Nation are tightening their own belts and must live within their means. It's time the Federal Government does the same with Americans' hard-earned tax dollars.

The solution begins with the Cut, Cap, and Balance bill—cut spending now, live within our means by capping future spending, and move towards a balanced budget amendment.

Mr. President, we have a debt crisis and it's time for a plan now.

SUCCESS OF STIMULUS

(Ms. BROWN of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, last week, during the debate on disaster relief funding, a Republican from Louisiana called the stimulus bill a "disaster." I wonder if the victims of disasters such as the BP spill or Hurricane Katrina would agree. Let's compare.

Katrina destroyed about 400,000 jobs and caused \$100 billion in damages. The stimulus bill gave \$237 billion in tax breaks to 95 percent of American workers. According to the CBO, the stimulus bill saved or created 3.3 million jobs this year alone. Does that sound like a disaster, Mr. Speaker?

We are still counting the losses from the BP oil spill, but we know that companies like BP get \$4 billion in tax subsidies every year. That's what I call a disaster. On the other hand, the stimulus bill saved over 400,000 jobs. Over 6,000 of those educational jobs are in Louisiana and 48,000 in Florida. Does that sound like a disaster to you?

Today I will place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the latest breakdown of the educational jobs saved by the stimulus.

THE CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE ACT

(Mr. MCKINLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, the size of our debt is the greatest threat to our Nation's economy, and it inhibits the creation of jobs, jobs needed in West Virginia and all across America. But there is a plan to correct this. The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act, which I'm cosponsoring, lays out a clear and responsible vision for solving our debt limit crisis.

President Obama must realize that his request to raise the debt ceiling without fundamental spending reforms is a non-starter. I won't deny that the President inherited a bad economic situation, but he made it worse. His failed stimulus program, the job-killing costs of ObamaCare, and the billions of dollars added to our country's spending through expanded programs have all contributed to the trillion dollars of new debt we are faced with today.

It's time to get serious and solve the problem. We have a plan. Let's pass Cut, Cap, and Balance today.

ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF DEFAULT

(Ms. MOORE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, you've heard the so-called "experts" predict the economic consequences of default on the debt, but your question is, what does this have to do with me? And GWEN, can you please tell me what this means in plain English? For example, the Federal Reserve analysis that default would cause point increases in Treasury yields. Translation: Every point increase means the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs—your job.

The economist William Seyfried said a 1 percent change in GDP growth correlates with .4 percent total employment change. Translation: Every percentage loss of GDP means 640,000 lost jobs—your jobs.

Default permanently raises the interest rates, says J.P. Morgan, and they estimate that interest rates could rise 75 to 100 basis points. Translation: Mortgages rise \$1,000; credit card interest rises by \$250. And the decline of the value of the dollar. Translation: \$182 extra on your utilities, \$318 a year on

food, \$100 a year more on gas. Do you get it?

WASHINGTON HAS A SPENDING PROBLEM

(Mr. TIPTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I just got off the phone with a constituent of mine, Tom Abbot, a small businessman who cares about his family, cares about his business, the people that he works with. He asked a very simple question: I have to live within my budget; why doesn't Washington?

The plan that we have put forward would take over a 10-year period, capping the spending at 18 percent. As Americans, I think we need to ask the question: Have we had an 18 percent increase in our family budgets year over year? I think the answer is no.

I'd like to quote for you some of the President's plan to deal with the economic challenges that we face. There is not one. The silence is deafening.

My friends, the American people expect more. The American people deserve better. Washington does not have an income problem; it has a spending problem. And the time for us to speak on behalf of the American people is now.

□ 1230

MEDICARE'S SUCCESSFUL ANTI-POVERTY PROGRAM

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, July is a month to celebrate birthdays, the independence of this Nation, and the 46th birthday of Medicare. Medicare is the best health care program ever and the most successful anti-poverty program.

So the question we should all be asking ourselves is, why then do the Republicans want to do away with Medicare as we know it? And the answer probably is because we have forgotten what Medicare was meant to do.

Prior to 1965, 44 percent of our seniors had no health care. Now 40 million are enrolled. Before 1965, 40 percent of those 65 and older were at or below the poverty level. Now only 10 percent fall in that category. Life expectancy was 70.2 years. Now it is 78.2 years of age. So we should ask ourselves: Why do we want to touch Medicare as we know it? Medicare has done what we needed it to do.

Happy birthday, Medicare.

CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE PLAN

(Mr. HENSARLING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, every day in my district in Texas, I

hear from small business people who tell me, I'm afraid to hire new workers because I think this national debt will end up bankrupting my business, not to mention my country.

The American people are saying to Washington, quit spending money we don't have.

So today, House Republicans will bring to the floor the Cut, Cap, and Balance plan. Cut Federal spending at least back to its 2008 levels. Who is going around saying government wasn't big enough before Barack Obama came here?

Cap it. Let's make sure government doesn't grow beyond our ability to pay for it.

And then balance. Small businesses, families, States, everyone has to balance their budget except for the Federal Government. Is there any mystery why we have \$14 trillion of debt? There is no other credible plan on the table that avoids default and solves the problem.

The Senate, 800 days, no budget. The President, he gives us a speech, not a plan. And the only thing he has put on the table is more job-killing tax increases on small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, that doesn't work. It is time for cut, cap, and balance.

MAKE AMERICANS DEBT FREE

(Mr. CLARKE of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I'm asking this Congress to cut the true tax that is really crushing Americans, that is preventing real job growth and robbing our people of financial security. I am asking this Congress on certain loans to cut mortgages down to home values. For certain student loan borrowers, let's forgive those student loans.

This Congress is responsible for the American people in large part being in the debt that they are in. We deregulated many financial institutions that recklessly put the American people in debt. The one powerful way to restore our economy and create jobs is to make sure Americans personally are debt free.

HONORING MARINE CORPORAL KYLE SCHNEIDER

(Ms. BUERKLE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. BUERKLE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I wish to inform the House of Representatives that on June 30, 2011, Marine Corporal Kyle Schneider of Phoenix, New York, in Onondaga County was killed by an improvised explosive device while serving in Helmand province, Afghanistan.

Corporal Schneider was born in Syracuse and lived in Baldwinsville, New York, for most of his life. He was a graduate of Baker High School and at-

tended Onondaga Community College for a year before enlisting in the Marine Corps in 2008. Corporal Schneider is survived by his parents, Richard and Lorie Schneider; a brother, Kevin; and his fiancée, Theresa Lynn Dodge of West Columbia, Texas.

Corporal Schneider was a proud and valiant marine. But he was also a son, a brother, a grandson, a fiancée, friend, and comrade. He will be greatly missed, and no words will diminish the grief of those who knew and loved him. In his death, he has earned the thanks of a grateful Nation.

REJECT CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE

(Mr. BRALEY of Iowa asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Wake up, America. We are going to be voting today on a bill that has never seen a committee hearing. It has never been the subject of a markup in any committee, and there are going to be no amendments to this bill. The Republicans are calling this their Cut, Cap, and Balance bill. But in reality, it is gut, gap, and handcuff.

Gut: There is no way to get to their numbers of deficit reduction without seriously gutting Medicare, Social Security, and Medicaid. No way.

Gap: Their policies are going to further widen the income gap between middle class Americans and the richest Americans by perpetuating a policy that has allowed that to exist for the last 10 years.

And handcuff: You would be speaking German, Japanese, or Russian if this balanced budget amendment was in effect during World War II and during the Cold War, because during World War II we had debt in this country that was 120 percent of our GDP, and in the dawn of the Cold War, it was 100 percent of our GDP.

That is why this bill doesn't make sense for America. I urge my colleagues to reject it.

ENACT CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE

(Mr. BILIRAKIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, today the House will vote to enact a Cut, Cap, and Balance plan to put an end to the spending-driven debt that has crippled our economy.

There has been a lot of talk about getting our fiscal house in order. While some in Washington would like to simply fix up the front yard, today's proposal will give our fiscal house a new foundation and fundamentally reform the way that our government spends money. This plan incorporates real spending cuts today, places limits on Federal spending for coming years, and advances a balanced budget amendment to address our debt crisis and kick-start our economy.

The bottom line is that we have to reduce our spending and start living

within our means. This crisis is not just a problem for the future; it is hurting job creation today. We must focus on establishing an environment that will help create jobs. The Cut, Cap, and Balance plan does just that.

REJECT THE CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE ACT

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues today to address H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act.

House Republicans are bringing to the floor H.R. 2560, which is another attempt to enact the policies embedded in their budget resolution. However, this act is even more extreme because it mandates that the House and Senate approve a constitutional amendment imposing their political philosophy.

While House Democrats have pushed for a balanced approach to minimize the deficit, Republican Members have pushed forward with a plan to end Medicare in order to preserve tax breaks for special interests, Big Oil, and corporations that transport jobs abroad. Throughout the process of negotiations, House Democrats have focused on protecting Medicare, strengthening the middle class, and creating jobs. America's middle class and seniors will suffer the most as the GOP continues to stand in the way of a reasonable, balanced deficit reduction agreement.

The national unemployment rate is down to 9.1 percent; however, 8.8 million jobs were lost. So I ask that we reject this bill coming up.

□ 1240

TIME FOR A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

(Mr. NUGENT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, 49 States do it. Counties do it. Cities do it. Now it's time for the Federal Government to do it—to pass a balanced budget amendment. It is about passing a balanced budget amendment and getting this Nation back on track to meet our obligations, our spending obligations, but also to match it with what we bring in and collect in taxes and revenues.

Mr. Speaker, it's time for a balanced budget amendment.

A PERVERSION OF THE CONSTITUTION

(Mr. POLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, what is being talked about today in terms of

inserting language into our United States Constitution that constrains fiscal policy is nothing more and nothing less than a perversion of our democratic Republic. To take a major power away from the people of this country and replace it with an arbitrary percentage, 18, 19.7 percent, whatever that percentage is that is proposed to put into the Constitution as a percentage of GNP to spend on government, takes a basic power away from the people to elect Representatives to have those discussions.

That's what we're here for. Should it be 18 percent? 22 percent? 19 percent? 15 percent? Let's debate that and let the House and let the people of this country work their will. To put that into the United States Constitution in an arbitrary figure without a single hearing, without a single discussion, besides 1 hour of debate here on the floor of the House, is a perversion of the very Constitution that we began this session by reading into the RECORD of the House.

CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE

(Mr. SCALISE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, over the last few months, we've heard a lot of speeches about fiscal responsibility. Today, here on the floor of the House of Representatives, we're going to give Members of Congress the opportunity to put their money where their mouth is.

The cut, cap, and balance plan actually imposes real cuts to spending today. It puts caps on future growth, and it says that we're going to put an amendment in the Constitution that requires the Federal Government to do what States and families do, and that's actually balance the budget.

Yet yesterday, the President comes out and says he would veto this plan. Well, of course, this is a President who said he wants commissions to balance the budget, who blames other people for the problems in Washington, who makes you think that the corporate jet owners are going to mysteriously balance the budget.

This is a real proposal that actually gets us back to a balanced budget. The President, I think, has shown that he's not serious about addressing the problem of out-of-control spending. It's not that we're taxed too little in this country; it's that Washington spends too much.

Cut, cap, and balance actually addresses the problem and puts fiscal sanity back in Washington where it's desperately needed.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has agreed to a concurrent resolution of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 25. Concurrent resolution welcoming the independence of the Republic of South Sudan, congratulating the people of South Sudan for freely and peacefully expressing their will through an internationally accepted referendum, and calling on the Governments and people of Sudan and South Sudan to peacefully resolve outstanding issues including the final status of Abyei.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2560, CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE ACT OF 2011

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 355 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 355

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 2560) to cut, cap, and balance the Federal budget. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) four hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK). The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. WOODALL. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

For the purpose of debate only, I would like to yield the customary 30 minutes to my friend from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WOODALL. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 355 provides a closed rule for consideration of H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act of 2011. The rule provides for 4 hours of general debate on the underlying bill and grants the minority party a motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, we are at a seminal moment in our Nation's history. When I turn on the television, when I read the newspapers, I get a lot of advice. Folks say act: act to raise the debt ceiling, act to cut spending, act to balance the budget.

Mr. Speaker, today we are here to do all of those things—cut, cap, balance, and with it increase the debt ceiling in order to allow this country to continue its good line of credit.

But, Mr. Speaker, that line of credit is not something we can take for granted. Too often, I hear folks come to the

floor and say, Just raise the debt ceiling. As you know, Mr. Speaker, we've had that vote. We brought a clean debt limit vote to the floor. I would say for the sake of all the young people we're blessed to have here in the gallery with us today, Mr. Speaker, we voted "no." We defeated that clean debt ceiling to say, no, we cannot simply extend America's line of credit. We must take action to bend that curve of debt. Now that was this House acting, Mr. Speaker.

Last week, America's credit rating agencies joined in that debate. I read to you from Moody's last week:

"While the debt ceiling has been raised numerous times in the past and the issue has sometimes been contentious, bond interest and principal payments have always been paid on time. If the debt limit is raised again and default is avoided, a AAA rating would likely be confirmed."

That's what we hear all too often, Mr. Speaker. What we don't hear is this second sentence:

"However, the outlook assigned at that time would very likely be changed to negative unless a substantial and credible agreement is achieved on a budget that includes long-term deficit reduction. To retain a stable outlook, such an agreement should include a deficit trajectory that leads to stabilization and then decline in the ratio of the Federal Government debt to GDP."

Mr. Speaker, that may be a lot of bond analyst speak, but what that means in simple terms is, if we do nothing as a Nation, our credit rating will be downgraded, and if we simply raise the debt limit and do nothing to get a handle on our debt, our credit rating will also be downgraded. That's Moody's, Mr. Speaker.

S&P writes the same thing last week:

"We view an inability to timely agree and credibly implement medium-term fiscal consolidation policy as inconsistent with a AAA solvent rating, given the expected government debt trajectory noted above."

Mr. Speaker, that's what we're talking about today. Just cutting doesn't get it done. We've got some debt limit issues that we've got to deal with. Just capping doesn't get it done. We've still got some debt limit issues that we've got to deal with. Just balancing doesn't get it done. We've still got debt limit issues that we have to deal with. But, Mr. Speaker, just raising the debt limit doesn't get it done either.

It requires cutting, it requires capping, it requires balancing, and it requires raising the debt limit.

We have brought that resolution to the floor today. Mr. Speaker, while so many other folks in this town are content to talk, to pontificate, to share their wisdom with absolutely any television camera who will listen, this House moves forward legislation that describes line by line by line, in painful detail, what we will do to restore America's fiscal house.

I'm proud to be a cosponsor of this legislation. I'm proud to be a member of the Rules Committee that has reported this rule to the floor today. I rise in strong support of this rule, Mr. Speaker.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia, my friend, Mr. WOODALL, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself 5 minutes.

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this closed rule and in even stronger opposition to the underlying bill. This is a closed rule.

My friend from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) was on the floor last week telling us how excited he was as we debated a modified open rule for a flood insurance bill. My friend talked about how proud he was of the open process that allowed Members to offer germane amendments to the bill. But here we are today considering legislation that would fundamentally transform the United States economy, gut many of the programs like Social Security and Medicare that millions of Americans rely upon, and make radical changes to the Constitution, and the Republican majority of the Rules Committee has brought it to the floor under a closed rule. No hearings. No witnesses. No markups. No nothing.

□ 1250

This bill was cobbled together last Friday night and rushed to the floor just a few days later. I wonder if my friend from Georgia is just as excited about this process, because I'm sure not.

Last night in the Rules Committee, I offered my friends on the other side of the aisle the opportunity to put their votes where their rhetoric is and support an open rule. They chose to vote "no." Every single Republican member on the Rules Committee voted "no."

As for the underlying legislation, Mr. Speaker, I can't quite figure out if this is a meaningless exercise in political theater or an actual expression of Republican values. Frankly, I can't figure out which is worse. If it's theater, it would get lousy reviews. Both the White House and the Senate have made it very clear that they have no interest in supporting this bill. It's not going anywhere. Maybe it's just a rotten piece of red meat that the leadership is throwing to their right-wing base in anticipation of an actual agreement to raise the debt ceiling and cut the deficit. If so, it's a complete waste of this body's time. But if the Republican leadership means what they say, that they would like this bill to become the law of the land, it's a frightening prospect.

This legislation would result in staggering cuts to programs like Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, Pell Grants, medical research, and infra-

structure, all while protecting tax cuts for the very wealthiest Americans and corporations. The bill would require us to cut Federal spending as a percentage of GDP to a level not seen since 1965.

And we had a very interesting discussion in the Rules Committee last night about the significance of that date. One of my Republican colleagues noted that 1965 was a time when we enacted some of our "so-called anti-poverty programs." And she's exactly right, Mr. Speaker.

Apparently, the Republican leadership would like to take America back to a time before Medicare, before Medicaid, before food stamps and school lunches, before Meals on Wheels and Head Start and Pell Grants. If that's their vision for America, Mr. Speaker, they should have the guts to stand on the floor and say so. But it's not my vision. It's not the vision of the people I represent in Massachusetts. It's not the vision of the American people who believe that in the richest society in the history of the world we have an obligation to make sure that the most vulnerable among us don't fall through the cracks.

At the same time, this bill would go out of its way to enshrine in the Constitution of the United States to protect tax cuts and loopholes for the richest 1 percent of Americans. Under this bill, Congress would need a mere majority to slash Medicare, but would need a supermajority to close a loophole that gives preferential treatment to owners of corporate jets. Talk about picking winners and losers, Mr. Speaker.

In the ongoing budget negotiations, the Republican leadership of this House have said that they will absolutely not consider raising any revenue to address the deficit and the debt, but listen to this: According to news reports, they're willing to force seniors receiving Medicare home health care to fork over new copays. So if an elderly woman in Worcester with diabetes has to pay more for a visiting nurse, the Republicans say so be it. But heaven forbid that oil companies making billions and billions of dollars in profits have to pay their fair share. Maybe they'll call those new copays "user fees" so that Grover Norquist and the Club for Growth will give them a pass. But tell the woman in Worcester who will be forced to go into a nursing home that her taxes didn't go up.

Mr. Speaker, this is an awful, awful bill brought to the floor under an awful, awful process. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to reject this cynical effort and get back to work and meaningfully address the budget issues facing this Nation. Time is running out. We need to get to work to seriously resolve this crisis. Reject this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I'm confused about whether time is running out or about whether we're moving too quickly here today, but to clar-

ify that, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to my friend from the Rules Committee, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. NUGENT).

Mr. NUGENT. I thank my fellow Rules Committee member, the gentleman from Georgia.

I rise in support of both the rule, H. Res. 355, and the underlying legislation, H.R. 2560.

Mr. Speaker, there's no way to get around it: Washington has a spending addiction. The unchecked, out-of-control spending has gone on for decades. Regardless of what party controlled the White House or Congress, Washington spent, spent, and spent some more. And although throughout his campaign President Obama promised a "net spending cut," that hasn't happened. In fact, he's kept on spending and adding trillions of dollars to our debt, and that's why we're in the situation we are today, debating raising our debt ceiling once again.

Mr. Speaker, I don't want to raise the debt ceiling. Instead, I want our Nation to get real with the spending and make some changes. H.R. 2560 isn't the easy choice, but it's the right choice, and that's why I'm cosponsor of this critical piece of legislation.

H.R. 2560 raises the debt ceiling, something I'm willing to say most of my Republican colleagues and I decidedly do not want to do. In return, though, H.R. 2560 implements spending cuts for this year and caps for the next 10 years.

But we all know statutory budget cuts from past Congresses don't mean an awful lot, which is why H.R. 2560 also calls for Congress to pass and send to the States a balanced budget amendment. Such an amendment would really hold Washington's feet to the fire. It would mean the U.S. Constitution prohibits the Federal Government from spending more than it collects.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WOODALL. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. NUGENT. Now that, Mr. Speaker, is a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution. That's real action. It's the real change and accountability in government that America needs and deserves. Mr. Speaker, we need a balanced budget amendment.

The President has yet to send to this body anything in writing. All we've received is a speech and rhetoric. We need to move this country forward. We need a balanced budget amendment. We need to pass H.R. 2560.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado, a member of the Rules Committee, Mr. POLIS.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts for the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule and the underlying bill before us.

Mr. Speaker, I support a balanced budget amendment, but what the majority has brought before the House is

not even close to a balanced budget amendment. This is a political exercise designed to soothe the feelings of the most radical conservative elements in the House and debase our Constitution and our democracy in the process.

Cut, cap, and balance is simply an attempt to slash, burn, and deny responsibility for the deficit and debt limit crisis and distort the nature of our democratic Republic, reducing the ability of Congress to represent the will of the voters of this country and rendering elections and the public will meaningless.

If we're going to enact a balanced budget amendment, it should be pragmatic. It should be modeled after the type of approach that most States have. States have to balance their budget. Families have to balance their budget. Why shouldn't the United States Congress? Like many people on my side of the aisle, I could support language that would require and enshrine that total outlays do not exceed total receipts. That's what it means to balance a budget, as families and businesses across America know.

Instead, the proposal before the House is a recipe for tying the Nation's budget policy in knots and handing power over the budget process to a minority of the House Members or unelected Federal judges. It would make the entire Congress cease to function as a representative body by locking them into arbitrary percentages that were set without a single hearing or any process in our United States Constitution as a public expenditure share of GNP.

If you require a supermajority for even the smallest possible increase in revenue, you've essentially ensured that all the major pieces of legislation that Congress has passed would never have passed. If this amendment were in place in 1965, Congress never would have passed Medicare. In 1993, we wouldn't have passed President Clinton's deficit reduction plan and balanced the budget, or the 1997 balanced budget agreement under President Bush.

Furthermore, the spending caps that this bill sets for spending are completely arbitrary. They're pulled out of thin air. They bear no relation to our national needs now or in the future.

A balanced budget amendment must treat outlays and revenues equally, not bias one or the other in the Constitution itself, our fundamental governing document.

The majority is not only ignoring the realities of basic math, they're turning their backs on the pledges of an open process. This bill was brought to the floor rapidly through the Rules Committee yesterday, without a markup, without hearings, without witness testimony, and without allowing amendments from Republicans or Democrats.

□ 1300

A bill of this magnitude with such far-reaching consequences for our de-

mocracy itself should be treated more seriously than this. The concept of enshrining a particular percentage of public expenditures as a percentage of GDP is contrary to the concept of a democratic republic in which Congress is elected by the people of this country to govern this country.

For these reasons and others, I strongly urge a "no" vote on the rule and the bill.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to a gentleman who held a very persuasive Special Order on this topic last night, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS).

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. I certainly thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, all financial budgets will eventually balance. No individual, no family, no business, and no government can indefinitely continue to spend more money than they take in without someone having to make up the difference. Mr. Speaker, that includes the Federal budget of the United States.

Neither Mr. Obama nor congressional Democrats can repeal the laws of mathematics. The Federal budget of the United States Government will eventually balance. The question is whether the White House and those of us in this body will balance this budget ourselves by wise policy or whether national bankruptcy and financial ruin will do it for us.

From the day Barack Obama walked into the White House, his breathtakingly arrogant policies have absolutely ignored economic and financial reality. It took America the first 216 years of its existence to accumulate the debt that Barack Obama has accumulated in the short 2½-year span of his Presidency. He rammed a nearly \$1 trillion government takeover of health care down the throats of the American people, and he spent another nearly \$1 trillion on a failed government-based boondoggle for economic stimulus. During his short time in office, he has increased our Federal debt by nearly \$4 trillion in new debt, and now he says we will have \$1 trillion-plus deficits "for years to come."

Then, when speaking of the effort to reduce the deficit, the President has the hubris to tell conservative Republicans to take a balanced approach and to eat our peas. To that, I would just say to the President: Please pull up a chair, sir. We are ready to eat our peas, and we need help.

This Cut, Cap, and Balance bill is actually a solution to America's problem. It does not cut Social Security. It does not cut Medicare. It does not cut compensation to our men and women in uniform by one dime; but the balanced budget amendment it proposes does give us an honest chance of reforming and saving those programs and our country from bankruptcy in the future.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the Democrat Congress of last year that gave a standing ovation to a \$2 trillion increase in our debt limit. This is the

Congress that was sent here by the American people to turn things around—and the American people are awake, Mr. Speaker. They are watching us, and they are tired of Democrats telling them that 2+2=13. If Democrats and the President are not willing to give the American people this chance by helping Republicans pass a balanced budget amendment in this Congress, the resulting consequences will be theirs alone, and I believe the people will hold them accountable.

By passing this Cut, Cap, and Balance bill along with the balanced budget amendment, we can restore confidence in the American economy in markets here and across the world. We can see more revenue come into these coffers than has ever happened in the history of the Nation, and we can set this country on a new road to the brightest days it has ever seen. It is something that is truly an opportunity beyond our dreams. This is the time to do it, and by the grace of God, that's exactly what we intend to do.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. Under the Republican plan, they will cut Social Security and Medicare by \$6,000 per senior citizen. Talk about a tax increase.

At this point, I would like to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the gentleman very much for yielding.

I am just overwhelmed with the words "breathhtakingly arrogant policies." I am literally shocked, and let me tell you why.

When you want to understand, my Republican friends, why we're in the position we're in, what about the 37.5 percent of the debt being the Bush-era tax cuts of which this bill and any of your negotiations don't in any way suggest revenue?—which the American people understand.

Arrogant policies by the President? The Recovery and Reinvestment was only 5.2 percent, creating 3 million jobs. Let me say that again: 3 million jobs. The economic downturn came about with the Iraq war and others.

So, today, my friends come on the floor of the House with the Cut, Cap, and Balance. As a member of the Judiciary Committee, let me suggest to you that the amendments that were put in the bill have destroyed any sense of balance to the balanced budget amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I have a new name for the bill, the bill which tap dances around the question of revenue and lifting the debt ceiling, which was done 60-plus times over America's lifetime with Reagan, Carter, President Bush and President Bush, and Clinton. So it's the "Tap Dance, Losers' Club and Bust the benefits bill." The losers are seniors and young people and those who need Social Security and those

who are disabled. Then, finally, instead of the balanced budget amendment, it is the bust the benefits of those who are in need and of the young people who are looking forward to a prosperous future and expanded opportunities in this Nation.

What do we need?—not the Cut, Cap, and Balance. It in no way invests in America. It in no way ends the tax loopholes that are part of our increasing debt. It will block the United States Congress from closing the loopholes of those who make billions of dollars every 3 months. We need innovation, infrastructure and education. That equals jobs.

Parents, I don't want to see the end of your children's opportunities by closing elementary and high schools and by disallowing them from going to college. That is what this bill is—not to cut, not to cap, not to balance. It's the "Tap Dance, Losers' Club, and Bust the Benefits of the American People bill." Let me suggest to you that these are the losers of this bill. Don't support a bill that will cause the American people to lose the American Dream.

I rise today in opposition to H.R. 2560, the "Cut, Cap, and Balance Act of 2011," which attempts to resolve our budget ceiling crisis by authorizing an increase in the debt limit while implementing spending cuts, caps on future spending, and requiring an amendment to the Constitution. While I support bipartisan efforts to increase the debt limit, I cannot support a bill that is a clear attempt to enact the policies embedded in the Republican budget resolution and to then enshrine the Republican budget in our Nation's Constitution.

This bill should be called the "Tap Dance, Loser Club, and Bust Bill." It tap dances around raising our debt ceiling and acting in a responsible manner to pay our Nation's debt obligations. Our Nation will be joining the losers club by threatening to eliminate important social programs such as Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, and Pell grants. There has been a theme this Congress of focusing on cutting programs for the most at need and ignoring the need to focus on job creation. This bill busts the hopes and dreams of our children, seniors, and military families. It busts the hopes to grow our Nation in the future. H.R. 2560 has earned the name the "Tap Dance, Loser Club, and Bust Bill." I will call it that from this point forward, because that is what it is . . . when something walks like a duck, quacks like a duck and looks like a duck . . . Call it a duck!!!! This bill is wasting a tremendous amount of time when we should be focused on paying our Nation's bills and resolving our differences!

I stand here today to state firmly that increasing the debt ceiling is the responsible thing to do. Congress has already debated and approved the debt that an increased ceiling makes room for. However, my Republican colleagues have chosen to use this as an opportunity to hold the American people hostage to their extreme agenda. They know that the "Tap Dance Loser Club, and Bust Bill" is not a realistic proposal.

The fact that Congress, a body that typically has its fair share of political battles, has never played political chicken when it came to raising the debt ceiling should give us all pause,

and is a testament to the seriousness with which we must approach this issue. However, this time around, my Republican colleagues have created an impasse based upon an ideological commitment to spending cuts. While I understand and share the concern of my Republican colleagues with respect to deficit spending, and will continue to work with them in order to find reductions, now is not the time to put ideology over pragmatism. The reality is that, on August 3rd, the United States will begin to default on its debt obligations if the debt ceiling is not raised.

This detour into a spending debate is as unnecessary as it is perilous, as increasing the debt ceiling does not obligate the undertaking of any new spending by the Federal Government. Rather, raising the debt limit simply allows the government to pay existing legal obligations promised to debt holders that were already agreed to by Presidents and Congresses, both past and present.

Moreover, the impending crisis would have already occurred were it not for the extraordinary measures taken by Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, including the suspension of the investment in securities to finance the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund, as well as the redemption of a portion of those securities already held by that fund.

If the United States defaults on its obligations on August 3rd, the stock market will react violently to the news that for the first time in history, America is unable to keep its promises to pay. Not once in American history has the country's full faith and credit been called into question.

Once America defaults, investors who purchase U.S. bonds and finance our government will be less likely to lend to America in the future. Just as a person who defaults on a loan will find it harder to convince banks to lend them money in the future, a country that defaults on its debt obligations will find it harder to convince investors to lend money to a government that did not pay. Showing the world that the United States does not pay its debts makes the purchasing of that debt less desirable because it requires the assumption of more risk on the part of the investors.

Furthermore, any investors that do continue to purchase U.S. Treasury bonds will demand much higher interest rates in order to cover the increased risk. Once a default occurs, investors figure that the chance of the United States defaulting again is much greater, and will require the government to pay higher rates of interest in order to make the loan worth the risk for investors to take on.

Imagine the impact on our stock market if we do not pay our debts. As we have seen throughout the recent financial crisis, a bad stock market hurts not only big businesses and large investors on Wall Street, but small businesses and small investors as well. Families with investments tied to the stock market, such as 401(k)s, pension plans, and savings, will once again see the value of their investments drop. The American people are tired of the uncertainty of the value of their retirement accounts. We must not allow another wild fluctuation to occur due to default and add to the uncertainty still lingering in the minds of citizens.

As if another stock market crisis were not enough, the housing market would take another hit if America defaulted. Higher mortgage rates in a housing market already weak-

ened by default and foreclosures would cause a further depression of home values, destroying whatever equity families might have left in their homes after the housing crisis. Moreover, the long-term effects would reduce spending and investment in the housing market.

Republicans are attempting to place into our constitution the requirement that we balance the budget every year. In reality, achieving a balanced budget is not something that should automatically be required every year. For example, during economic downturns, the government can stimulate growth by cutting taxes and increasing spending. A constitutional amendment requiring us to cut spending to match revenue every year would limit our ability to respond to changing fiscal conditions and would dramatically impede federal responses to high unemployment as well as federal guarantees for food and medical assistance.

As it stands, H.J. Res. 1 requires spending cuts even deeper than those in this bill; in fact, it requires that spending be cut to the levels in the Republican Study Committee budget, levels that were so extreme that fewer than half of House Republicans voted for that budget. Finally, requiring a two-thirds vote to approve revenue increases creates a barrier to fixing inequities in our tax code by protecting more than \$1 trillion in spending through the tax code—spending that often benefits special interests, like owners of corporate jets—and well-to-do Americans.

H.R. 2560 cuts \$111 billion in FY 2012, places firm caps on future spending, and is contingent upon House and Senate passage of a Balanced Budget Amendment.

H.R. 2560, is yet another attempt to enact the policies that Republicans approved with their budget resolution this spring—to end the Medicare guarantee while continuing tax breaks for special interests and the wealthy. It requires immediate and steep spending cuts starting this October that will put more Americans out of work while the country is still recovering from the worst recession since the Great Depression. It caps total spending—including mandatory spending programs, such as unemployment benefits, that are designed to grow when the economy is bad—for fiscal years 2013–2021 at lower percentages of the economy (Gross Domestic Product, or GDP).

While it is clear that the country cannot continue on an unsustainable fiscal path, the bill limits spending to a percentage of GDP that the country has rarely achieved in the past. For example, the bill limits total outlays to 19.7 percent of GDP in 2018; outlays were at or below that level in only 12 of the last 43 years (from 1997 through 2004, and from 1969 through 1972).

Enforces the Republican budget resolution by limiting total federal outlays—including Social Security and Medicare—at the Republican budget's percentage of GDP in fiscal years 2013 through 2021. Automatic sequestration again would occur if the levels are breached. More immediately.

H.R. 2560 requires passage of a specific type of a so-called "balanced budget" constitutional amendment by both the House and the Senate before the debt limit can be increased. This new hurdle makes it even harder for Congress to increase the debt limit by August 2, which it must do to avoid fiscal calamity and higher interest costs for consumers and the government alike.

STEEP SPENDING CUTS FOR 2012

H.R. 2560 limits fiscal year 2012 discretionary and entitlement spending to the levels in the Republican budget. If spending exceeds these limits there would be an automatic sequestration that makes an across-the-board cut to most programs to bring down spending. Spending in 2012 is to be cut by a net total of \$111 billion below current services.

Discretionary Cap—The bill's authors say they intend to cut non-security discretionary spending for next year by \$76 billion (a roughly one quarter reduction in budget authority), to below the 2008 level, and increase security spending, matching the President's request. However, the bill does not provide separate discretionary caps except for war funding, so Congress could cut where it chooses.

Entitlement Cap—The bill exempts veterans' benefits, Medicare, Social Security, and net interest from its entitlement (or direct spending) cap. These programs comprise roughly two-thirds of all entitlement spending. The bill cuts the remaining direct spending by \$51 billion (7 percent) in 2012, down to the levels in the Republican budget. The cuts will fall on programs like school lunches, student loans, food stamps (SNAP), Medicaid, and unemployment insurance—some of the very programs designed to automatically increase when the economy is down in order to lessen the impact of job losses and associated economic hardship.

As with the discretionary cap, there would be an automatic sequestration if direct spending is not sufficiently cut. Past sequestration provisions exempted specific programs, including low-income programs, but this bill repeals the broad list that has been the basis for sequestration in the past. Instead the bill exempts a smaller range of programs (but comprising about half of the budget): military personnel accounts, TRICARE for Life, military retirement, veterans benefits, Medicare, Social Security, and net interest.

HOLDS DEBT LIMIT INCREASE HOSTAGE TO PASSAGE OF SPECIFIC TYPE OF BALANCED BUDGET CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

This bill will add a new obstacle to increasing the debt limit before the August 2 deadline by mandating that the House and the Senate first pass a Constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget. The bill specifies that the Constitutional amendment has to be H.J. Res. 1 or a "similar amendment" that (1) limits total outlays to no more than total receipts; (2) limits spending as a percentage of GDP; and (3) requires that tax increases be approved by a two-thirds vote in both Houses of Congress.

Moreover, the Constitutional amendment itself is merely a ploy to make tax cuts for the wealthy and tax loopholes for big corporations a permanent fixture of American governance. It would make any revenue-raising measure unconstitutional unless a two-thirds supermajority approves it. This is simply unprecedented and unacceptable.

An alternative plan, put forth by Senate Democratic and Republican Majority and Minority Leaders HARRY REID and MITCH MCCONNELL, respectively, deals with the debt ceiling crisis in a way that is less controversial for Democrats. Although still in the negotiation stages, the plan has a few emerging ideas and general bipartisan support in the Senate. However, House Republicans have expressed their dissatisfaction with the proposal.

Tentatively, the Reid-McConnell Debt Ceiling Proposal would allow the President to

raise the debt ceiling 3 times in the next year in an amount totaling \$2.5 trillion. Furthermore, it permits Congress to vote on a resolution of disapproval of each increase of the debt ceiling, essentially assigning blame to President Obama for each increase. It includes a plan to reduce the deficit in the amount of \$1.5 trillion over 10 years through cuts to domestic programs, while avoiding cuts to entitlement programs or raising new taxes.

Moreover, the Reid-McConnell debt ceiling proposal would create a new Congressional Panel tasked with coming up with, by the end of the year, a way of reducing the deficit by another \$2.5 trillion or more through cuts in entitlements and other yet-to-be identified steps. The proposed committee would be comprised of 12 lawmakers who would issue a report to Congress on how to achieve this. While I am still not convinced that the cuts for this proposal will not unfairly harm our seniors and other beneficiaries of domestic programs, I anticipate the product of these negotiations, as they appear to be far more realistic than the bill before us today.

I urge my Colleagues to oppose H.R. 2560 which I have called the "Tap Dance, Loser Club, and Bust Bill," for it will send our Nation in the wrong direction. This detour into a spending debate is as unnecessary as it is perilous, as increasing the debt ceiling does not obligate the undertaking of any new spending by the federal government. Rather, raising the debt limit simply allows the government to pay existing legal obligations promised to debt holders that were already agreed to by Presidents and Congresses, both past and present. We must protect Medicare, Social Security, Pell Grants and a plethora of other programs that are aimed at helping our citizens. I will not stand by any bill which threatens to eliminate Medicare.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds to say to the gentle lady that there is only one bill in this Congress that abolishes every single corporate loophole in the entire United States Tax Code. That's H.R. 25, the Fair Tax. I would welcome the gentle lady on that bill because I too share a desire to see those loopholes eliminated.

I now yield 2 minutes to a cosponsor of the Fair Tax, the gentleman who has cosponsored bipartisan tort reform legislation here in the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY).

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise, of course, in strong support of this bill and rule, that of cut, cap, and balance.

The gentle lady from Texas just stood up and said she would call it the "Tap Dance" bill. Quite frankly, what the President has in mind I would refer to as the "Whistling Past the Graveyard" plan. This cut, cap, and balance approach to this problem is just that within the first provision of cutting spending, Mr. Speaker, of \$111 billion and with \$35 billion of that, by the way, for mandatory spending, yet not one dime—not one dime—from Social Security or Medicare. We protect our seniors.

But as to this spending problem, I mean, it's just like the problem in this

country with drunk driving. Are we going to solve that problem by raising the blood alcohol level? Absolutely not. Are we going to solve this problem of runaway spending by just simply raising the debt ceiling without these caveats of cut, cap, and balance? Absolutely not. That's why we have to do this—to rein in this spending and to bring it down to historical levels of 20 percent of GDP.

Then the final part of cut, cap, and balance, Mr. Speaker, is the balance part. The President is asking for a balanced approach. That's exactly what this is. This is the balanced approach that makes sense because every other pledge in the past with regard to reining in spending, whether we're talking about Pay-As-You-Go—the Democrats like to tout that plan—never has worked because we don't abide by these pledges; we continue to spend.

The only way to make sure that future Congresses rein in this spending on a permanent level is to have a balanced budget amendment that calls for a supermajority to raise taxes. There are 49 out of 50 States that have a balanced budget amendment. Why in the world wouldn't Democrats join with Republicans in calling for a balanced budget amendment? Then to think that the President would issue a statement of administrative policy in opposition to this is absolutely ridiculous.

Support this commonsense bill. Stand strong for our country. This is the land of the free, but it has to be the land of the strong before it can become the land of the free.

□ 1310

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 10 seconds.

I just want to say to the gentleman from Georgia the reason why the President issued a veto threat is because he doesn't want you to destroy Social Security and Medicare, two of the most important social programs in this country that benefit millions and millions of seniors.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI).

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this rule and the extreme ideological bill before us today.

The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act, or as it should be more appropriately called the "cut, cap, and end Medicare act," is one of the most radical bills to come before this body.

But perhaps I should not be surprised. I've already seen the majority of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle vote to end Medicare, slash Medicaid, and now they want to cut Social Security benefits, too.

Instead of listening to the American people, the House Republican leadership continues to advocate for the elimination of Medicare, all while continuing to protect tax loopholes and

subsidies for Big Oil and Wall Street executives. This bill is actually more extreme than the Republican budget passed in April calling for deeper cuts and more hardships for the middle class and older Americans.

In fact, this bill does nothing to create jobs nor invest in the roads, bridges, clean energy technology, and job training that would really get our economy moving.

In short, H.R. 2560 will stifle growth, hurt middle class families, and undercut America's seniors. In my district there are over 93,000 Social Security beneficiaries and over 85,000 Medicare enrollees.

On behalf of my constituents and for future generations, I stand in strong opposition to this bill and the rule. I know that there are those on the other side of the aisle who want to support a reasonable plan to reduce the deficit. This is not the plan.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to reject this dangerous proposal.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to my friend from Indiana (Mr. PENCE).

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise as a cosponsor and urge strong support of my colleagues for the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act, H.R. 2560.

I really believe if you owe debts, pay debts. We must find a way to honor the full faith and credit of the United States of America. But even more important than that, we must find a way to restore the faith and confidence of the American people and the world community in the fiscal integrity of the United States of America. That is our dual challenge.

After years of runaway Federal spending by both political parties, after failed economic policies by this administration, we find ourselves at a place of unprecedented fiscal crisis—more than a \$14 trillion national debt, \$1.65 trillion deficits. We now borrow more than 40 cents of every dollar that we spend here in Washington, D.C.

The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act applies commonsense principles and fiscal discipline to the challenges of spending restraint today, but it also introduces a new element—and that is a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. Yes, we cut spending by \$111 billion next year, about \$5.8 trillion over 10. Yes, we cap Federal spending to back under 20 percent of GDP. But I think the time has come to make any increase in the debt ceiling contingent on sending a balanced budget amendment to the States. And here's why.

Washington, D.C., is not only broke, it's broken. Let me say again. After more than a decade here seeing my party in power in Congress and in the White House, seeing another party in

power in Congress and the White House, I am convinced that Washington, D.C., is not only broke, it's broken.

And the American people know in their heart of hearts there is something missing in the equation. It's in the guardrails in the Constitution of the United States of America. It is the guardrails that say it must be the objective of the Congress and of this and of future administrations to live within our means.

Thirty-one States have a balanced budget requirement in their constitution. Indiana has a prohibition on incurring debt. Forty-nine States require a balanced budget.

The time has come to cut, the time has come to cap spending, but the time has come to make any increase in the debt ceiling contingent on sending a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution to the States for ratification. And this we must do.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON).

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to use the 30 seconds, but I wanted to ask the distinguished gentleman from Indiana a question with my 30 seconds if he would be willing.

Will the gentleman engage in a brief question and answer?

As I understand it, under your balanced budget amendment, in the event that Congress is unable to achieve a balanced budget, a lawsuit could be filed forcing the Federal judiciary into the budget process. In effect, your balanced budget amendment would reverse the constitutional relationship by legalizing the legislature and politicizing the Judiciary. Is that your expectation, that a Federal judge could ultimately have the final say over budget matters in the House?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentleman an additional 10 seconds.

Mr. PENCE. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. PENCE. It would be my expectation that we would not yield the jurisdiction of constitutionality exclusively to the judiciary. Throughout American history, it has mostly settled there, but we contain it as well. But ultimately it would put the American people in charge—

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Reclaiming my time—

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has again expired.

Mr. WOODALL. At this time I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to another cosponsor of the Fair Tax, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON).

(Mr. CULBERSON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, today the House is honoring a pledge

that we made to America in the largest landslide election in 70 years last November when the people of America spoke clearly and elected a new majority to govern the House to take America down the path to a balanced budget to restore prosperity, to restore jobs that had been lost under this President.

The American people spoke decisively last November and asked this new constitutional conservative majority in the House to cut spending, to cap spending, to enact a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, to shrink the size of the government, to get the government out of our lives and out of our pockets and put us back on a path of prosperity, which this legislation does.

I am very proud to be a coauthor of the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act of the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, which has worked so well in Texas. Texas is a beacon for other States. We have demonstrated in Texas when you live within your means, when you cut taxes, when you limit litigation, when you limit regulation, when you get the government out of our pockets and off our backs that American ingenuity, American entrepreneurship will thrive and the economy will grow.

People have been voting with their feet to move to Texas, and we in this new constitutional conservative majority in the House are doing today what we promised America we would do last November. We are cutting. We're reaffirming the Ryan budget which, by the way, does not affect—anyone over the age of 55 is unaffected by the Ryan budget, is unaffected by this Cut, Cap, and Balance Act, but if we do nothing, if you are under the age of 55, you will be affected because Medicare is on a path to bankruptcy, as is Social Security.

So we're taking decisive action today, Mr. Speaker, to put America back on a path to prosperity, to grow jobs, to get the Federal Government back within the bounds of the Constitution with a balanced budget amendment. I am very proud today, Mr. Speaker, to be here in support of this legislation, which will honor the promise we made to America.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California, a member of the Budget Committee, Mr. HONDA.

Mr. HONDA. I rise today to oppose this ridiculous cut, cap, and balance proposal.

By walking away from every negotiation—from the Deficit Commission to the Biden Commission to direct talks with the President—Republicans have made it clear that they place petty politics above responsibly solving the country's budget challenges. This is the first budget bill or deficit reduction plan in the past quarter century that fails to specifically protect programs for the most vulnerable Americans from across-the-board cuts.

□ 1320

The “duck, dodge, and dismantle act” will butcher Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, unemployment insurance, child nutrition, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, nutrition for Women, Infants, and Children, Planned Parenthood, supplemental income for the elderly, public schools, teachers, and pay for firefighters and cops—all so that the Republicans can protect tax breaks and tax subsidies for the wealthy and powerful by erecting a constitutional barrier to any measure that would raise any revenue.

This bill is as extreme as it is unprecedented. It is not a serious response to months of good faith negotiations by the Democrats. I call on the House Republicans to stop the games and the posturing and do the responsible thing for the American people, and I urge my colleagues to reject this bill.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, at this time, it gives me great pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana, Dr. BOUSTANY.

Mr. BOUSTANY. I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Our country is at a pivotal point in its history. Economists would call this an inflection point. But for those of us who are not economists, it's a critical time; it's a pivotal time. We have to decide, are we going to compete in the 21st century and see this country prosper and lead in the 21st century? Or will we sink in a sea of red ink? That's what it's come down to.

I think we need to move forward with a bold plan. We haven't seen anything from the President. He hasn't put anything on the table. We're coming forward with a plan that's credible. It lays out a path, a credible path to get us back to fiscal sanity. \$46,000 for every man, woman, and child is what the debt stands at today, and that does not include the unfunded liabilities going to the future, which takes us well north of that figure. We have a lot of work to do. It's time for this Congress to get serious about its responsibility, its responsibility to bring fiscal sanity and fiscal balance back.

We have a spending problem. There is clearly a spending problem. But if you look at the two fundamental problems facing the country, it's our unsustainable debt, but it's also the lack of economic growth to create private sector jobs. Now if we take the path that our friends want to take, they're going to raise taxes. They're going to raise taxes across the board. And what you're going to see is a worsening economic situation. We're not going to see the kind of job growth—in fact, we very well could go back into a recession with that type of plan.

Our plan puts us on a sustainable path. Coupled with tax reform, coupled with an energy strategy which we have, and moving forward with an aggressive export-oriented trade policy, you will see a competitive America; you will see job growth in this country.

But we have got to get spending under control.

And today is the day we can cast that vote. Today is the day we can decide we're going to restore American competitiveness, we're going to restore American credibility, and we're going to restore American confidence.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, let me just say to the gentleman from Louisiana that we can't compete without investments in innovation and infrastructure and education, and the bill that my Republican friends have brought before us today on the floor would devastate this economy. It would absolutely devastate the American economy.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO).

(Mr. SERRANO asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SERRANO. I thank the gentleman.

I rise today to speak against this rule and this bill. This will not solve our Nation's problems but, instead, will devastate our economy and the most vulnerable in our society.

Our Nation has run into fiscal problems for three reasons, none of which are addressed by this bill: the Bush tax cuts, foreign wars, and the recession.

When the fiscal situation of the government was better, I warned that their spending on tax cuts and foreign wars would cause fiscal problems which Republicans would then balance on the backs of social programs. But when the times were good, Republicans ignored these valid concerns, saying that “tax cuts pay for themselves” and, famously, “deficits don't matter.” They were wrong, and working families are suffering.

Now we get the explanation that by cutting government jobs and spending, you will create jobs and revive the economy. However, it is clear that what we really need are good, stable jobs and stimulus in order for the economy to grow again. My constituents never got the benefits of the Bush bubble. They worked the jobs that were available and paid their taxes. Now the jobs have evaporated, and the social safety net that they paid into is under severe threat.

I will vote against this bill on behalf of my constituents and the people like them across this Nation. I will be casting a vote for fairness and economic growth, against the Bush policies that the Republicans are seeking to extend, and for a better future for our children.

Our Nation became great by making investments in our people and infrastructure and by creating a stable middle class and a robust social safety net. It became great through Americans supporting one another and paying their fair share of the taxes. Today, we watch as the Republicans continue to turn their backs on that history and continue their push towards a “me first” economic system. I want no part of that bleak future, nor should our Nation.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds to say that that competing vision of trillions more in stimulus and more in government jobs and more in government spending is one idea of how to revive this economy. It's just not one that I share.

I yield at this time 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS), who also I do not believe shares that opinion.

Mr. BROOKS. Mr. Speaker, back home in my district, one of the things I am understanding and communicating with people is the difficulty in their understanding the difference between millions in debt, billions in debt, and trillions in debt. So I heard an analogy the other day that I thought was appropriate, that hopefully will help the American people better understand the financial situation in the United States of America.

Imagine that you are a family and you haven't been keeping track of your finances for a good while. Finally, you decide to sit down at your kitchen table, the two spouses get together, and they accumulate their income, they accumulate their expenses, and they accumulate their debt. And as they go through their income, they discover that they have about \$50,000 that they can spend—that's their income—for the upcoming year. And then they look at their expenses, and they put all the bills together and how they spent over the past year. And they discover that last year, they spent \$80,000, meaning that they have spent \$30,000 more than their income. And then finally, they pick up their Visa card bill, and that Visa card bill is \$320,000.

Well, those are the exact same ratios that we're talking about with the United States Government and the debt that we face. We have got a budget that's around \$3.5 trillion. We have got an income that's a little over \$2 trillion, and we have a deficit that is \$14.3 trillion. All of that is unsustainable. It is a financial house of cards. And we have to take a tough but reasonable course, and that's what cut, cap, and balance is all about. Cut, cap, and balance, that is the way we score financial security for the United States of America, and that is the way to create jobs.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. I rise in strong opposition to this rule and the legislation before us today.

If we do not act in 2 weeks, the United States will, for the first time in history, default on its debt. With the economy in a vulnerable position right now, we should be working to create jobs. Instead of acting responsibly and in a bipartisan way to raise the debt ceiling, the Republican majority has decided to make this a form of hostage-taking to press their agenda.

Congress has always paid for its past financial commitments with Republican majorities agreeing to raise the

debt ceiling seven times during the Bush administration. Everyone understands the long-term challenge posed by budget deficits, and President Obama and Democrats support a balanced approach to addressing that challenge.

Yet the ideological and extreme bill before us today does not address the number one concern of the American public, jobs, but rather seeks to implement an agenda that will, in fact, destroy jobs and the social safety net, ends Medicare, and reduces the Social Security benefits that our seniors have earned and deserve. Rather than making investments to create jobs and economic growth, the Republican majority is proposing cuts which will lead to a loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs, even as we are mired in unacceptably high unemployment.

With this bill, the Republicans choose to put in place a spending cap that will cement in law the Republican budget that chooses to end Medicare, places the burden of deficit reduction on the backs of the middle class and the most vulnerable. And, finally, the Republican majority is choosing to hold hostage an increase in the debt ceiling to the approval of an amendment that will make it impossible to raise revenue.

What do I mean? It will make it impossible to end the subsidies to Big Oil, make it impossible to close the loopholes that allow corporations to ship their jobs overseas, or abuse tax havens that allow them to pay almost nothing in Federal taxes. To achieve deficit reduction, they will end Medicare, implement deep cuts to Social Security and other programs that are critical to the middle class.

□ 1330

Instead, what they need to do is to go after the 12 largest corporations in this Nation. The Citizens for Tax Justice has said that those corporations pay a negative 1½ percent tax on \$171 billion in profits and about \$64 billion in tax subsidies.

You want to do something to balance the budget and make a deal with deficit reduction? Go after those corporations that are paying zero in taxes instead of going after middle class Americans or seniors who rely on Medicare and who rely on Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, this Republican agenda undermines America as a country where middle class American families have an opportunity for a decent retirement.

Oppose this outrageous piece of legislation.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to a colleague who is a great leader on this issue, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN).

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, this is quite an interesting debate that we're having, and I think it is an historic day. It is a time when we have the opportunity to do something about the out-of-control, reckless Washington spending. It's long overdue.

I had an email from a constituent a few minutes ago. They're watching the debate and, I would offer to my colleagues, I think lots of Americans are watching this debate. They're waiting to see if we have the courage, if we have the political will to actually do something about spending money we don't have for programs our constituents don't want.

Amazingly, my constituent could not believe that there are people who would actually come to this floor and say that they opposed cutting what the Federal Government spends because we're borrowing 40 cents of every dollar that is spent. They were amazed that people would oppose placing a cap over what that government can spend. And they were quite amazed that they would actually stand and oppose a balanced budget amendment, something that is long overdue for our country.

This problem has been years, decades in the making. I think we all agree with that. But I also think there's one thing that we will all agree with: The past 3 years has seen such a rapid rate of accelerated spending that it has added \$3.4 trillion, this administration has added \$3.4 trillion to our debt. Unprecedented.

And, indeed, included in that was the passage of the President's health care bill, PPACA, or Obamacare, which spent another \$1.2 trillion. And, by the way, to my colleagues, you all made the choice and the decision in that bill to cut \$575 billion out of Medicare. I just remind you of that.

The time has come for fiscal responsibility. It is time to pass Cut, Cap, and Balance. I encourage my colleagues to support the rule and to support the bill.

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, before I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts, I just would like to respond to the gentlelady from Tennessee.

When she talks about the need for political will, what we need is the political will to stand up to Big Oil and to end subsidies that amount to corporate welfare.

The bill that my Republican colleagues are bringing to the floor today let's them off the hook and, instead, goes after the poor and the most vulnerable and our senior citizens. That's why this bill is so outrageous, because they are so unfair.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY).

Mr. MARKEY. Americans today are getting an up-close view of Republicans' misguided plans, misplaced priorities, and massive assault on the middle class. It's not, as they call it, "Cap, Cut, and Balance." It's really a "Cash Cow for Billionaires."

The Republicans are pushing Grandma and middle class families overboard while protecting the superrich and the powerful.

Will Republicans protect Grandma's Medicare and Social Security checks? No. Grandma is being pushed overboard.

What about programs that help low-income children visit their doctor? No. They are getting pushed overboard.

What about programs that ensure that veterans benefits are paid on time? No, veterans are being pushed overboard.

But the massive Bush tax cuts for the wealthy, the tax subsidies for Big Oil? They're too precious, the Republicans say. They have to be kept on board. So billionaires will not see their undeserved tax breaks taken away. The oil industry will not see their unjustified tax subsidies, as consumers are tipped upside down at gas stations, taken away from them. No, those subsidies, they have to be kept on board. And, ladies and gentlemen, that's not fair. That's not balanced.

Grandma, kids, veterans, they should not have to contribute to balancing the budget, but billionaires and Big Oil are exempted by the Republicans. This is the face of their party—Big Oil and billionaires. That's who they are protecting.

They have deficit attention disorder. If there were such a thing as a Nobel Prize in economics in reverse, they would be the first winners of it.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to a mentor of mine, the gentleman from the great State of Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. After a 3-year spending spree in which the President drove up the national debt by 56 percent, the President has the nerve to tell the American people that they have to eat their peas. This from a President who has had the Federal Government on a supersize me diet since the day he was sworn in. Marie Antoinette would be proud of such arrogance.

One must ask, where has the President been? He owns this economy. It's his policies that have left 15 million Americans without work. It's his policies that have stifled business growth and investment. It's his policies that have given us more deficit spending than any other administration in history.

The President talks about entitlement reform but offers no plan, no legislation. The President talks about his budget fairness, and yet this very budget was rejected by the HARRY REID Senate Democrats by a vote of 97–0.

The President denounces the Bush tax cuts yet personally extended them a few months ago. In 2006, the President voted against increasing the debt ceiling citing a lack of leadership, now he offers none.

But today, the House Republicans will lead with a plan. That plan is cut, cap, and balance. And on the back, we have the President's plan. This is it: speeches. That's what we get after 3 years and the largest deficit in history from the President of the United States, speeches and admonishments.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield to my friend from Illinois.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Is it the gentleman's opinion that under the Republican cut, cap, and balance program—

Mr. KINGSTON. Reclaiming my time, you've got to go fast because I'm willing to answer your question but I can't—

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Is the gentleman prepared to turn the balancing aspect of this program over to the Federal judiciary?

Mr. KINGSTON. The President has backed us up against the wall. If we don't do something serious and, yes—

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Is the gentleman prepared to turn the balancing aspect over to the Federal judiciary?

Mr. KINGSTON. I agree with you. By law we need to have a balanced budget amendment so that Congress' hands will be tied from increasing the deficit.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Will it be the responsibility of the Federal judiciary?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

□ 1340

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS).

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule and the underlying bill.

For months our colleagues on the other side have known of the need to avoid a default crisis and meet our Nation's obligations. But instead, today they move with lightning speed to the floor a sham bill that is nothing more than a way to score political points at a time that we need, the markets need, and the world needs seriousness.

It's time to meet our obligations for seniors, retirees, and veterans, for Social Security and Medicare, and to create jobs and grow this economy. Those on the other side of the aisle know that the bill that's on the floor today would do nothing like that. The underlying bill would in fact reap catastrophic consequences for our Nation's economy and our most vulnerable communities, and that's the truth.

What kind of majority wants to throw our economy into another tailspin by having us default on our obligations? Well, I'm going to tell you it's the irresponsible kind. They have been unrelenting in their quest to eliminate Medicare and cut Social Security, and this bill is no different.

The American public needs to understand what is at stake here: It's the default on our Nation's obligations that will throw out of whack Social Security, Medicare benefits, veterans' benefits, everything that we know in this economy because of the foolishness that's going on here in this Chamber.

I ask my colleagues to please be responsible. Protect our future; protect our children's future; invest in our roads and our bridges and our infrastructure; create jobs; but please stop this foolishness.

I ask for a "no" vote on the bill and a "no" vote on the underlying rule.

Mr. WOODALL. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON).

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I'm going to try to speak as quickly as I possibly can.

Under the balanced budget amendment, the sole responsibility for interpreting the Constitution of the United States is the Federal court system, a Federal judge. And I wanted to ask the gentleman if he would join me in just an answer to the question—since it's on my time—what would qualify a Federal judge to cut a Federal program? What would qualify them? Would we take them through a process in the Senate, asking them what programs they support? Are we politicizing the judiciary?

Mr. WOODALL. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. WOODALL. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The answer is there's absolutely nothing different from this amendment than any other amendment to the Constitution that relies on the judiciary to interpret it.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Reclaiming my time, so instead of the Congress of the United States making a judgment about programs and then answering to the people in an elective political process, we are shifting the responsibility to a Federal judge to make a cut in the program; is that correct?

Mr. WOODALL. That is not correct. The responsibility lies here, as my colleague knows. But as is true with every word in the Constitution, it relies on the judiciary to interpret it.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Reclaiming my time, the responsibility for interpreting the Constitution is a Federal judge. Under a balanced budget amendment, a Federal judge would be responsible for cutting these programs; is that correct?

Mr. WOODALL. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. I would be happy to yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. WOODALL. I have the sponsor of the legislation right here to answer that very question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WOODALL. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time. Does the gentleman have additional speakers?

Mr. WOODALL. I don't, though I do have the bill's sponsor here to answer any questions you all might have.

Mr. MCGOVERN. He didn't answer any of them last night; so I'm not sure whether we will get many answers here today.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS).

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I will not take a minute. I will just ask the sponsor of the bill, as I did last night in the Rules Committee, do you genuinely believe that this particular measure is going to become the law?

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from Utah.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I genuinely hope it does become the law. I think the American people deserve this Federal Government to live within the confines of a balanced budget amendment.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Reclaiming my time, I heard the word that you "hope." Let me tell you what I told you last night; I'll bet you cash money that it ain't going to become the law.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. If the gentleman will yield, I don't take cash bets. But you know what? You also talked about bouncing; and the only thing that's going to bounce is the government's check.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida has yielded back his time.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I'm sorry. I thought he yielded to me. I apologize.

Mr. WOODALL. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, once again I stand in strong opposition to this closed rule and to the underlying bill.

It's time for a grown-up moment, Mr. Speaker. It's time for the Members of the House, Republican and Democrat, to come together to address the looming crisis over the debt limit. We are exactly 2 weeks away from the possibility of the United States defaulting on its obligations of not paying its bills. This is not an acceptable outcome.

I know that there are some on the other side of the aisle—in fact I talked to one just this morning—who will not vote for anything that raises the debt ceiling. That's unfortunate. Default would result in collapsing markets and skyrocketing interest rates. It would deal a devastating blow to the full faith and credit of the United States. It would throw even more Americans out of work. The bill before us does nothing to prevent that outcome.

Slashing Medicare and Social Security while protecting tax cuts for the wealthy is not a responsible solution. I think the American people have made it clear in poll after poll after poll. They have said to my Republican colleagues, keep your hands off of Medicare and off of Social Security.

What my Republican colleagues are trying to do with this legislation is lower the standard of living for our senior citizens. They deserve a hell of a lot better. The fact of the matter is our senior citizens have built this country, they have worked hard to make this country what is today. They deserve better from this Congress. They should

not have to pay to balance this budget because they did not cause this economic crisis.

It is just simply unfair to protect all this corporate welfare, all these tax loopholes to protect corporations with jets and to protect corporations so they don't have to pay taxes, and they can incorporate overseas in Bermuda or the Cayman Islands. It is just wrong. It is wrong to continue these subsidies to Big Oil that have made billions and billions and billions of dollars. Why aren't they paying their fair share?

And Mr. Speaker, it is just wrong to radically alter the Constitution of the United States of America. We need to focus on jobs, and innovation plus infrastructure plus education equals jobs. We have to invest as well as cut. This bill would slash the investments we need to put people back to work and to grow our economy. It cuts Pell Grants. It would cut education at every level. It would cut monies for roads and bridges. It would cut money that would help this economy grow that can help put more people back to work so we can start reducing the debt in a responsible way.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of this debate, I will ask the House to defeat the previous question. If the previous question is defeated, I will offer an amendment that will ensure that this bill does nothing to impede job increases and economic growth. So a vote in favor of the previous question is a vote to increase unemployment and to threaten our economic recovery.

Given the fact that you gave us a closed rule, I don't think it's too much to ask that we have at least some language in here that protects jobs and that would protect the American worker.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD along with extraneous materials immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the previous question, reject this closed rule that is unfair, and reject the underlying legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WOODALL. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it was 224 years ago that the Constitutional Convention was wrapping up that summer in 1787. Ben Franklin walked out of the front door and a woman asked him, "What did you create?" And he famously responded, "A republic, if you can keep it." That's what the debate is about here today, Mr. Speaker—our Republic, and can we keep it?

Mr. Speaker, the last time we debated a balanced budget amendment was back in 1995, 16 years ago. At that time, now-Minority Leader STENY

HOYER said this: "This country confronts a critical threat caused by the continuation of large annual deficits. I am absolutely convinced that the long-term consequences of refusing to come to grips with the necessity to balance our budget will be catastrophic. And those who will pay the highest price for our fiscal responsibility, should we fail, will be those least able to protect themselves and the children of today and the generations of tomorrow."

Mr. Speaker, this debate is about those who are least able to protect themselves, and this is about the vision that we have chosen for ourselves as Americans.

□ 1350

Mr. Speaker, 223 years ago, in a letter written in November, Thomas Jefferson said this: I wish it were possible to obtain a single amendment to our Constitution. I would be willing to depend on that alone for the reduction of the administration of our government to the genuine principles of its Constitution. I mean an additional article taking from government the power of borrowing.

Our Founding Fathers, 223 years ago—folks talk about a bill being rushed to the floor. This is a debate that has been going on since the founding of our Nation, since the founding of our Nation. We had this discussion in 1995. We had this discussion in 1994. Every Congress for the 10 years between 1985 and 1995, we discussed a balanced budget amendment. Apparently, there was no need to discuss it any longer, and look where we are.

I was down in Chinatown the other day, Mr. Speaker, where, conveniently enough, our United States debt auctions were held, right downtown in Chinatown. We sold \$36 billion of debt in Chinatown the day I was down there at 0.0005 percent interest. But hear this—I will close as I opened, Mr. Speaker—from our friends at S&P: "We view an inability to timely agree and credibly implement medium-term fiscal consolidation policy as inconsistent with a AAA sovereign rating."

Mr. Speaker, this isn't about raising the debt limit; this is about preserving the Republic. Go ahead and raise the debt limit; Moody's says that's not enough. Go ahead and raise the debt limit; S&P says that's not going to get you anywhere. Inconsistent with a AAA rating is the borrowing and spending that this Congress has brought to the House.

Now, we talked about rushing a bill to the House floor, Mr. Speaker. I'll say this, and some of my Democratic colleagues have said it, and I associate myself with their comments: This reflects the priorities of this House. What we're working on today is exactly what we were working on when we worked on H.R. 1 in February, one of the most open and brilliant moments in this House's history in terms of debate. Well, the priorities we are setting today are the same priorities we were

setting when we had that very open budget debate earlier this year in April where we brought every budget to the House and said: What can we agree on as a House? And you know what we agreed, Mr. Speaker? We agreed on the priorities that are set forth in Cut, Cap, and Balance.

Now, there has been a lot of talk about who is willing to compromise. Mr. Speaker, I can't find a single colleague on this side of the aisle who is enthusiastic about raising the debt limit, not one. But folks are willing to do it if we can preserve the Republic for our children and grandchildren, which we can do with cut, cap, and balance.

Mr. Speaker, there's all of this talk in Washington about default on the national debt. That is a serious conversation, a serious conversation.

I want to talk about defaulting on the promises of our Founders. I want to talk about defaulting on our Republic. One wish Thomas Jefferson had, one wish: If it were possible to obtain a single amendment to our Constitution, it would be an additional article taking from government the power of borrowing.

I understand, Mr. Speaker, that there's a lot of reluctance to do that. There are lots of great things that folks have, priorities that they would like to spend on. This isn't about those spending priorities. We'll still have that conversation. H.R. 1 was about those priorities. Our budget discussion was about our priorities. Today, it is about the future of our Republic. You need read no further, Mr. Speaker, than the credit rating agencies telling us that August 2 is not the date we have to fear. Today is the day that we have to fear because, if we fail to pass this bill, our Republic stands in peril.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support for this rule. I am grateful to the Budget Committee for bringing forward this resolution, and I ask for a unanimous vote of support as this resolution comes to the floor.

The text of the material previously referred to by Mr. MCGOVERN is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 355 OFFERED BY
MR. MCGOVERN OF MASSACHUSETTS

(1) Strike "the previous question" and all that follows and insert the following:

The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) four hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget; (2) the amendment printed in section 2, if offered by the Minority Leader or her designee, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, and shall be separately debatable for 30 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

(2) At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 2. The amendment referred to in the first section of this resolution is as follows:

At the end of the bill, insert the following:

TITLE IV—PROTECTIONS FOR JOBS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

SEC. 401. PROVISIONS OF ACT INEFFECTIVE IF RESULTING IN JOB LOSSES OR SLOWER GDP GROWTH.

No provision in this Act or amendment made by this Act shall apply if it would result in a reduction in private payroll employment or a slower growth of GDP.

(The information contained herein was provided by the Republican Minority on multiple occasions throughout the 110th and 111th Congresses.)

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the opposition, at least for the moment, to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

Because the vote today may look bad for the Republican majority they will say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Mem-

ber leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. WOODALL. I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 235, nays 175, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 603]

YEAS—235

Adams	Duncan (TN)	King (NY)
Aderholt	Ellmers	Kingston
Akin	Emerson	Kinzinger (IL)
Alexander	Farenthold	Kline
Amash	Fincher	Labrador
Austria	Fitzpatrick	Lamborn
Bachus	Flake	Lance
Barletta	Fleischmann	Landry
Bartlett	Fleming	Lankford
Barton (TX)	Flores	Latham
Bass (NH)	Forbes	LaTourette
Benishke	Fortenberry	Latta
Berg	Fox	Lewis (CA)
Biggart	Franks (AZ)	LoBiondo
Bilbray	Frelinghuysen	Long
Bilirakis	Gallely	Lucas
Bishop (UT)	Gardner	Luetkemeyer
Black	Garrett	Lummis
Blackburn	Gerlach	Lungren, Daniel
Bonner	Gibbs	E.
Bono Mack	Gibson	Mack
Boren	Gingrey (GA)	Manzullo
Boustany	Gohmert	Marchant
Brady (TX)	Goodlatte	Marino
Brooks	Gosar	McCarthy (CA)
Brown (GA)	Gowdy	McCauley
Buchanan	Granger	McClintock
Bucshon	Graves (GA)	McCotter
Buerkle	Griffin (AR)	McHenry
Burgess	Griffith (VA)	McKeon
Burton (IN)	Grimm	McKinley
Calvert	Guinta	McMorris
Camp	Guthrie	Rodgers
Campbell	Hall	Meehan
Canseco	Hanna	Mica
Cantor	Harper	Miller (FL)
Capito	Harris	Miller (MI)
Carter	Hartzler	Miller, Gary
Cassidy	Hastings (WA)	Mulvaney
Chabot	Hayworth	Murphy (PA)
Chaffetz	Heck	Myrick
Coble	Hensarling	Neugebauer
Coffman (CO)	Herger	Noem
Cole	Herrera Beutler	Nugent
Conaway	Huelskamp	Nunes
Crawford	Huizenga (MI)	Nunnelee
Crenshaw	Hultgren	Olson
Culberson	Hunter	Palazzo
Davis (KY)	Hurt	Paul
Denham	Issa	Paulsen
Dent	Jenkins	Pearce
DesJarlais	Johnson (IL)	Pence
Diaz-Balart	Johnson (OH)	Petri
Dold	Johnson, Sam	Pitts
Dreier	Jones	Platts
Duffy	Jordan	Poe (TX)
Duncan (SC)	Kelly	Pompeo

Posey	Runyan	Sullivan
Price (GA)	Ryan (WI)	Terry
Quayle	Scalise	Thompson (PA)
Reed	Schilling	Thornberry
Rehberg	Schmidt	Tiberi
Reichert	Schock	Tipton
Renacci	Schweikert	Turner
Ribble	Scott (SC)	Upton
Rigell	Scott, Austin	Walberg
Rivera	Sensenbrenner	Walden
Roby	Sessions	Walsh (IL)
Roe (TN)	Shimkus	Webster
Rogers (AL)	Shuler	West
Rogers (KY)	Shuster	Westmoreland
Rogers (MI)	Simpson	Whitfield
Rohrabacher	Smith (NE)	Wilson (SC)
Rokita	Smith (NJ)	Wittman
Rooney	Smith (TX)	Wolf
Ros-Lehtinen	Southerland	Womack
Roskam	Stearns	Woodall
Ross (FL)	Stivers	Yoder
Royce	Stutzman	Young (IN)

NAYS—175

Ackerman	Green, Al	Pallone
Altmire	Green, Gene	Pastor (AZ)
Andrews	Grijalva	Payne
Baca	Gutierrez	Pelosi
Baldwin	Hanabusa	Perlmutter
Barrow	Hastings (FL)	Peters
Bass (CA)	Heinrich	Peterson
Becerra	Higgins	Pingree (ME)
Berkley	Himes	Polis
Berman	Hinojosa	Price (NC)
Bishop (GA)	Hirono	Quigley
Bishop (NY)	Hochul	Rahall
Boswell	Holden	Rangel
Brady (PA)	Holt	Reyes
Braley (IA)	Honda	Richardson
Brown (FL)	Hoyer	Richmond
Butterfield	Inslee	Ross (AR)
Capps	Israel	Rothman (NJ)
Cardoza	Jackson (IL)	Roybal-Allard
Carnahan	Jackson Lee	Ruppersberger
Carney	(TX)	Ryan (OH)
Carson (IN)	Johnson (GA)	Sánchez, Linda
Chandler	Johnson, E. B.	T.
Chu	Kaptur	Sanchez, Loretta
Cicilline	Keating	Sarbanes
Clarke (MI)	Kildee	Schakowsky
Clarke (NY)	Kind	Schiff
Clay	Kissell	Schwartz
Cleaver	Kucinich	Scott (VA)
Clyburn	Langevin	Scott, David
Cohen	Larsen (WA)	Serrano
Connolly (VA)	Larson (CT)	Sewell
Conyers	Lee (CA)	Sherman
Cooper	Levin	Sires
Costa	Lewis (GA)	Slaughter
Costello	Lipinski	Smith (WA)
Courtney	Loftgren, Zoe	Speier
Critz	Lowey	Stark
Crowley	Lujan	Sutton
Cuellar	Lynch	Thompson (CA)
Cummings	Maloney	Thompson (MS)
Davis (CA)	Markey	Tierney
Davis (IL)	Matheson	Tonko
DeFazio	Matsui	Townes
DeGette	McCarthy (NY)	Tsongas
DeLauro	McCollum	Van Hollen
Deutch	McGovern	Velázquez
Dicks	McIntyre	Vislosky
Dingell	McNerney	Walz (MN)
Donnelly (IN)	Meeks	Wasserman
Doyle	Michaud	Schultz
Edwards	Miller (NC)	Waters
Engel	Miller, George	Watt
Eshoo	Moran	Waxman
Farr	Murphy (CT)	Welch
Fattah	Nadler	Woolsey
Frank (MA)	Napolitano	Wu
Fudge	Neal	Yarmuth
Garamendi	Olver	
Gonzalez	Owens	

NOT VOTING—21

Bachmann	Filner	Moore
Blumenauer	Giffords	Pascarell
Capuano	Graves (MO)	Rush
Castor (FL)	Hinchey	Schrader
Cravaack	King (IA)	Wilson (FL)
Doggett	Loeback	Young (AK)
Ellison	McDermott	Young (FL)

□ 1419

Messrs. ISRAEL, GUTIERREZ, and KILDEE changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Messrs. GUINTA, BARTLETT, and FRANKS of Arizona changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall 603, I was unable to vote due to previous commitments in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 13, 2011.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: I have the honor to transmit herewith a facsimile copy of a letter received from Mr. Jacob Corbin of the Elections Division of the California Secretary of State's office, indicating that, according to the unofficial returns of the Special Election held July 12, 2011, the Honorable Janice Hahn was elected Representative to Congress for the Thirty-Sixth Congressional District, State of California.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk.

Enclosure.

SECRETARY OF STATE,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA,
Sacramento, CA, July 12, 2011.

Hon. KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MS. HAAS: This is to advise you that the unofficial results of the Special General Election held on Tuesday, July 12, 2011, for Representative in Congress from the Thirty-Sixth Congressional District of California, show that Janice Hahn received 41,585 or 54.6 percent of the total number of votes cast for that office.

It would appear from these unofficial results that Janice Hahn was elected as Representative in Congress from the Thirty-Sixth Congressional District of California.

To the best of our knowledge and belief at this time, there is no contest to this election.

As soon as the official results are certified to this office by Los Angeles County, an official Certificate of Election will be prepared for transmittal as required by law.

Sincerely,

JACOB CORBIN,
Elections Division,
California Secretary of State.

SPECIAL ELECTION NIGHT VOTE TALLY SEMI-OFFICIAL CANVASS, U.S. REPRESENTATIVE 36TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT*

[Special General Election, July 12, 2011]

Districtwide Los Angeles County:**	
Registered Voters	342,492
Votes Cast	76,221
County Turnout %	22.3
Total Reportable Precincts	261
Precincts Reporting	261
Percentage of Precincts Reporting	100.0

	Janice Hahn, Dem.	Craig Huey, Rep.
Votes Cast	41,585	34,636
Percentage of Total Votes Cast	54.6	45.4

*Vacancy resulting from the resignation of Jane Harman.

**Congressional District 36 is wholly contained in Los Angeles County.

SWEARING IN OF THE HONORABLE JANICE HAHN, OF CALIFORNIA, AS A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentlewoman from California, the Honorable JANICE HAHN, be permitted to take the oath of office today.

Her certificate of election has not arrived, but there is no contest and no question has been raised with regard to her election.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER. Will Representative-elect HAHN and the members of the State delegation present themselves in the well.

All Members will rise and the Representative-elect will please raise her right hand.

Ms. HAHN appeared at the bar of the House and took the oath of office, as follows:

Do you solemnly swear or affirm that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter, so help you God.

The SPEAKER. Congratulations, you are now a Member of the 112th Congress.

WELCOMING THE HONORABLE JANICE HAHN TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from California is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, the residents of California's 36th Congressional District chose JANICE HAHN last week in a special election to succeed our esteemed colleague Jane Harman. Jane will be missed, but we welcome JANICE to Congress where she will undoubtedly serve as a powerful champion for her constituents.

She begins her career in Congress with a strong record of fighting for jobs, the environment and working families. As a city of Los Angeles councilwoman, she led successful initiatives to improve her community. She created jobs by standing with unions and advocating for development to promote tourism. She worked to clean the air in L.A. by addressing the pollution from the ports and by enacting strong diesel truck emission standards. She stood with working families through her support of living wages and health care.

JANICE carries on the legacy of her father, Kenny Hahn, a former Los Angeles County supervisor and a passionate civil rights advocate. As a

United States Congresswoman, JANICE will surely add more victories to her already long list of accomplishments.

She is joined today by her son Danny; daughter, Katy; son-in-law, John; and three grandchildren—Brooklyn, McKenna and Josiah.

Mr. DREIER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. STARK. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DREIER. I thank my friend for yielding.

Let me join on behalf of my Republican colleagues from California and across the country in extending a hearty congratulations to our new colleague, filling the great shoes—they're not huge shoes of course—but succeeding our good friend Jane Harman.

I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that JANICE HAHN comes from a family that has had a great, great, long tenure of public service. Her father, Kenneth Hahn, served as a supervisor in the County of Los Angeles—a huge job. They represent about three times as many people as we, Mr. Speaker; and her brother, of course, a judge, has served as the mayor of the city of Los Angeles.

Our new colleague has come here at certainly an extraordinarily crucial time in our Nation's history, and will face many challenges ahead; but I also want to say that our thoughts and prayers go to our new colleague. Not everyone knows that, literally on the eve of the election, her mother, Ramona, passed away suddenly. I know that she, as are all the members of the Hahn Family, would be extraordinarily proud of this moment.

We extend a hearty congratulations.

Mr. STARK. Please join me and all of the California delegation in welcoming JANICE.

The SPEAKER. The gentlewoman from California is recognized.

Ms. HAHN. Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker, Leader PELOSI, and honored Members.

It is wonderful to be here today representing the 36th Congressional District in California. I am honored and thankful for this incredible opportunity to serve here in the United States House of Representatives. I am humbled to be the first Los Angeles City councilmember elected to Congress since Ed Roybal almost 50 years ago.

I was born into public service. My dad, Kenny, represented the people of Los Angeles for 46 years. My brother, Jim, served as mayor, and is now a superior court judge. Our dad taught us that serving others is more than a job—it's a calling. It requires honesty, hard work and, most of all, the courage to do the right thing.

In 1961, a young and controversial civil rights leader named Martin Luther King, Jr. came to Los Angeles for his very first visit, and not a single elected official wanted to greet or welcome him except for one—my father.

That's where I got my political courage. We know that Americans are counting on us now more than ever to solve their problems, and working together with courage and in good faith, I believe we can and we will.

This past week, I experienced a wonderful victory but also a profound loss. My dear, sweet mother passed away unexpectedly the day before the election. She was the driving force behind our family, and this is the first accomplishment I've ever had and not been able to share with her. She was looking forward to seeing this day, and I know both she and my father are looking down today, smiling.

And for that, I want to thank everyone who made this possible. Thank you to my children—Katy, Danny and Mark; my son-in-law, John; my five beautiful grandchildren, three of whom are here today—McKenna, Brooklyn and Josiah; and thank you to Leader PELOSI, Democratic Whip HOYER and the California delegation.

I want to thank my good friend Jane Harman for her years of service to this Congress and to this Nation and to the people of the 36th District; and when she stepped down, I told her to leave the initials on the door.

Thanks to my campaign staff and volunteers and the voters. I will work every day, with every bit of strength that I have, to serve you.

I look forward to working with each and every one of you and in getting to know each and every one of you.

Thank you. God bless you, and God bless our beautiful country.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the administration of the oath to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HAHN), the whole number of the House is 433.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2560, CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE ACT OF 2011

The SPEAKER. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 236, noes 177, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 604]

AYES—236

Adams	Alexander	Bachus
Aderholt	Amash	Barletta
Akin	Austria	Bartlett

Barton (TX)	Griffith (VA)	Paul
Bass (NH)	Grimm	Paulsen
Benish	Guinta	Pearce
Berg	Guthrie	Pence
Biggert	Hall	Petri
Blibray	Hanna	Pitts
Bilirakis	Harper	Platts
Bishop (UT)	Harris	Poe (TX)
Black	Hartzler	Pompeo
Blackburn	Hastings (WA)	Posey
Bonner	Hayworth	Price (GA)
Bono Mack	Heck	Quayle
Boren	Hensarling	Reed
Boustany	Herger	Rehberg
Brady (TX)	Herrera Beutler	Reichert
Brooks	Huelskamp	Renacci
Broun (GA)	Huizenga (MI)	Ribble
Buchanan	Hultgren	Rigell
Bucshon	Hunter	Rivera
Buerkle	Hurt	Roby
Burgess	Issa	Roe (TN)
Burton (IN)	Jenkins	Rogers (AL)
Calvert	Johnson (IL)	Rogers (KY)
Camp	Johnson (OH)	Rogers (MI)
Campbell	Johnson, Sam	Rohrabacher
Canseco	Jones	Rokita
Cantor	Jordan	Rooney
Capito	Kelly	Ros-Lehtinen
Carter	King (IA)	Roskam
Cassidy	King (NY)	Ross (FL)
Chabot	Kingston	Royce
Chaffetz	Kinzinger (IL)	Runyan
Coble	Kline	Ryan (WI)
Coffman (CO)	Labrador	Scalise
Cole	Lamborn	Schilling
Conaway	Lance	Schmidt
Crawford	Landry	Schock
Crenshaw	Lankford	Schweikert
Culberson	Latham	Scott (SC)
Davis (KY)	LaTourette	Scott, Austin
Denham	Latta	Sensenbrenner
Dent	Lewis (CA)	Sessions
DesJarlais	LoBiondo	Shimkus
Diaz-Balart	Long	Shuler
Dold	Lucas	Shuster
Dreier	Luetkemeyer	Simpson
Duffy	Lummis	Smith (NE)
Duncan (SC)	Lungren, Daniel	Smith (NJ)
Duncan (TN)	E.	Smith (TX)
Ellmers	Mack	Southerland
Emerson	Manzullo	Stearns
Farenthold	Marchant	Stivers
Fincher	Marino	Stutzman
Fitzpatrick	McCarthy (CA)	Sullivan
Flake	McCauley	Terry
Fleischmann	McClintock	Thompson (PA)
Fleming	McCotter	Thornberry
Flores	McHenry	Tiberi
Forbes	McKeon	Tipton
Fortenberry	McKinley	Turner
Fox	McMorris	Upton
Franks (AZ)	Rodgers	Walberg
Frelinghuysen	Meehan	Walden
Gallely	Mica	Walsh (IL)
Gardner	Miller (FL)	Webster
Garrett	Miller (MI)	West
Gerlach	Miller, Gary	Westmoreland
Gibbs	Mulvaney	Whitfield
Gibson	Murphy (PA)	Whitman
Gingrey (GA)	Myrick	Wilson (SC)
Gohmert	Neugebauer	Wittman
Goodlatte	Noem	Wolf
Gosar	Nugent	Womack
Gowdy	Nunes	Woodall
Granger	Nunnelee	Yoder
Graves (GA)	Olson	Young (IN)
Griffin (AR)	Palazzo	

NOES—177

Ackerman	Carney	Cummings
Altmire	Carson (IN)	Davis (CA)
Andrews	Chandler	Davis (IL)
Baca	Chu	DeFazio
Baldwin	Cicilline	DeGette
Barrow	Clarke (MI)	DeLauro
Bass (CA)	Clarke (NY)	Deutch
Becerra	Clay	Dicks
Berkley	Cleaver	Dingell
Berman	Clyburn	Donnelly (IN)
Bishop (GA)	Cohen	Doyle
Bishop (NY)	Connolly (VA)	Edwards
Boswell	Conyers	Engel
Brady (PA)	Cooper	Eshoo
Braley (IA)	Costa	Farr
Brown (FL)	Costello	Fattah
Butterfield	Courtney	Frank (MA)
Capps	Critz	Fudge
Cardoza	Crowley	Garamendi
Carnahan	Cuellar	Gonzalez

Green, Al	Lynch	Roybal-Allard
Green, Gene	Maloney	Ruppersberger
Grijalva	Markley	Ryan (OH)
Gutierrez	Matheson	Sánchez, Linda
Hahn	Matsui	T.
Hanabusa	McCarthy (NY)	Sanchez, Loretta
Hastings (FL)	McCollum	Sarbanes
Heinrich	McGovern	Schakowsky
Higgins	McIntyre	Schiff
Himes	McNerney	Schwartz
Hinojosa	Meeks	Scott (VA)
Hirono	Michaud	Scott, David
Hochul	Miller (NC)	Serrano
Holden	Miller, George	Sewell
Holt	Moore	Sherman
Honda	Moran	Sires
Hoyer	Murphy (CT)	Slaughter
Inslee	Nadler	Smith (WA)
Israel	Napolitano	Speier
Jackson (IL)	Neal	Stark
Jackson Lee	Oliver	Sutton
(TX)	Owens	Thompson (CA)
Johnson (GA)	Pallone	Thompson (MS)
Johnson, E. B.	Pastor (AZ)	Tierney
Kaptur	Payne	Tonko
Keating	Perlmuter	Towns
Kildee	Peters	Tsongas
Kind	Peterson	Van Hollen
Kissell	Pingree (ME)	Velázquez
Kucinich	Polis	Visclosky
Langevin	Price (NC)	Walz (MN)
Larsen (WA)	Quigley	Wasserman
Larson (CT)	Rahall	Schultz
Lee (CA)	Rangel	Waters
Levin	Reyes	Watt
Lewis (GA)	Richardson	Waxman
Lipinski	Richmond	Welch
Lofgren, Zoe	Ross (AR)	Woolsey
Lowey	Rothman (NJ)	Wu
Lujan		Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—19

Bachmann	Filner	Rush
Blumenauer	Giffords	Schrader
Capuano	Graves (MO)	Wilson (FL)
Castor (FL)	Hinchey	Young (AK)
Cravaack	Loeback	Young (FL)
Doggett	McDermott	
Ellison	Pascarell	

□ 1439

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall 604, I was unable to vote due to previous commitments in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Madam Speaker, on Monday, July 18, and Tuesday, July 19, I missed a couple of rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on Nos. 601, 603, 604 and "nay" on No. 602.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. PASCARELL. Madam Speaker, today, July 19th, I unavoidably missed two rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall vote No. 603. On Ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 355. Additionally, had I been present I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 604, On Agreeing to H. Res. 355.

REPORT ON H.R. 2584, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2012

Mr. SIMPSON, from the Committee on Appropriations, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112-151) on the

bill (H.R. 2584) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, which was referred to the Union Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON). Pursuant to clause 1, rule XXI, all points of order are reserved on the bill.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2560.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE ACT OF 2011

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 355, I call up the bill (H.R. 2560) to cut, cap, and balance the Federal budget, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 355, the bill is considered read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2560

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Cut, Cap, and Balance Act of 2011”.

TITLE I—CUT

SEC. 101. MODIFICATION OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT.

Title III of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 is amended by inserting at the end the following:

“SEC. 316. DISCRETIONARY SPENDING LIMITS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—It shall not be in order in the House of Representatives or the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, amendment, or conference report that would cause the discretionary spending limits as set forth in this section to be exceeded.

“(b) LIMITS.—In this section, the term ‘discretionary spending limits’ means for fiscal year 2012: for the discretionary category, \$1,019,402,000,000 in new budget authority and \$1,224,568,000,000 in outlays.

“(c) ADJUSTMENTS.—After the reporting of a bill or joint resolution relating to the global war on terrorism described in subsection (d), or the offering of an amendment thereto or the submission of a conference report thereon—

“(1) the chair of the House or Senate Committee on the Budget may adjust the discretionary spending limits provided in this section for purposes of congressional enforcement, the budgetary aggregates in the concurrent resolution on the budget most recently adopted by the Senate and the House of Representatives, and allocations pursuant to section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, by the amount of new budget authority in that measure for that purpose and the outlays flowing therefrom; and

“(2) following any adjustment under paragraph (1), the House or Senate Committee on Appropriations may report appropriately revised suballocations pursuant to section 302(b) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to carry out this subsection.

“(d) GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM.—If a bill or joint resolution is reported making appropriations for fiscal year 2012 that provides funding for the global war on terrorism, the allowable adjustments provided for in subsection (c) for fiscal year 2012 shall not exceed \$126,544,000,000 in budget authority and the outlays flowing therefrom.

“SEC. 317. CERTAIN DIRECT SPENDING LIMITS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—It shall not be in order in the House of Representatives or the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, amendment, or conference report that includes any provision that would cause total direct spending, except as excluded in subsection (b), to exceed the limits specified in subsection (c).

“(b) EXEMPT FROM DIRECT SPENDING LIMITS.—Direct spending for the following functions is exempt from the limits specified in subsection (c):

“(1) Social Security, function 650.

“(2) Medicare, function 570.

“(3) Veterans Benefits and Services, function 700.

“(4) Net Interest, function 900.

“(c) LIMITS ON OTHER DIRECT SPENDING.—The total combined outlays for all direct spending not exempted in subsection (b) for fiscal year 2012 shall not exceed \$680,730,000,000.”

SEC. 102. STATUTORY ENFORCEMENT OF SPENDING CAPS THROUGH SEQUESTRATION.

Title III of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 is amended by inserting after section 317 the following new section:

“SEC. 318. ENFORCEMENT OF DISCRETIONARY AND DIRECT SPENDING CAPS.

“(a) IMPLEMENTATION.—The sequesters shall be implemented as follows:

“(1) DISCRETIONARY SPENDING IMPLEMENTATION.—For the discretionary limits in section 316 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, pursuant to section 251(a) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 with each category sequestered separately.

“(2) DIRECT SPENDING IMPLEMENTATION.—(A) The sequestration to enforce this section for direct spending shall be implemented pursuant to section 254 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

“(B) Section 255 of the Balanced Budget and Control Act of 1985 shall not apply to this section, except that payments for military personnel accounts (within subfunctional category 051), TRICARE for Life, Medicare (functional category 570), military retirement, Social Security (functional category 650), veterans (functional category 700), net interest (functional category 900), and discretionary appropriations shall be exempt.

“(b) MODIFICATION OF PRESIDENTIAL ORDER.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—At any time after the Director of OMB issues a sequestration report under subsection (a) and section 319(c) the provisions of section 258A of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 shall apply to the consideration in the House of Representatives and the Senate of a bill or joint resolution to override the order if the bill or joint resolution, as enacted, would achieve the same level of reductions in new budget authority and outlays for the applicable fiscal year as set forth in the order.

“(2) POINT OF ORDER.—In the House of Representatives or Senate, it shall not be in

order to consider a bill or joint resolution which waives, modifies, or in any way alters a sequestration order unless the chair of the House or Senate Committee on the Budget certifies that the measure achieves the same levels of reductions in new budget authority and outlays for the applicable year as set forth in the order.”

TITLE II—CAP

SEC. 201. LIMIT ON TOTAL SPENDING.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 250(c) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 is amended by striking paragraph (4), redesignating the succeeding paragraphs accordingly, and adding the following new paragraph:

“(19) The term ‘GDP’, for any fiscal year, means the gross domestic product during such fiscal year consistent with Department of Commerce definitions.”

(b) CAPS.—The Congressional Budget Act of 1974 is amended by inserting after section 318 the following new section:

“SEC. 319. ENFORCING GDP OUTLAY LIMITS.

“(a) ENFORCING GDP OUTLAY LIMITS.—In this section, the term ‘GDP outlay limit’ means an amount, as estimated by OMB, equal to—

“(1) projected GDP for that fiscal year as estimated by OMB, multiplied by

“(2) 21.7 percent for fiscal year 2013; 20.8 percent for fiscal year 2014; 20.2 percent for fiscal year 2015; 20.1 percent for fiscal year 2016; 19.9 percent for fiscal year 2017; 19.7 percent for fiscal year 2018; 19.9 percent for fiscal year 2019; 19.9 percent for fiscal year 2020; and 19.9 percent for fiscal year 2021.

“(b) GDP OUTLAY LIMIT AND OUTLAYS.—

“(1) DETERMINING THE GDP OUTLAY LIMIT.—The Office of Management and Budget shall establish in the President’s budget the GDP outlay limit for the budget year.

“(2) TOTAL FEDERAL OUTLAYS.—In this section, total Federal outlays shall include all on-budget and off-budget outlays.

“(c) SEQUESTRATION.—The sequestration to enforce this section shall be implemented pursuant to section 254 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

“(d) EXEMPT PROGRAMS.—Section 255 of the Balanced Budget and Control Act of 1985 shall not apply to this section, except that payments for military personnel accounts (within subfunctional category 051), TRICARE for Life, Medicare (functional category 570), military retirement, Social Security (functional category 650), veterans (functional category 700), and net interest (functional category 900) shall be exempt.”

SEC. 202. ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES UNDER THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT OF 1974.

(a) ENFORCEMENT.—Title III of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 is amended by adding after section 319 the following new section:

“SEC. 320. ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES.

“It shall not be in order in the House of Representatives or the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, amendment, or conference report that would cause the most recently reported current GDP outlay limits set forth in section 319 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to be exceeded.”

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 315 the following new items:

“Sec. 316. Discretionary spending limits.

“Sec. 317. Certain direct spending limits.

“Sec. 318. Enforcement of discretionary and direct spending caps.

“Sec. 319. Enforcing GDP outlay limits.

“Sec. 320. Enforcement procedures.”

TITLE III—BALANCE

SEC. 301. REQUIREMENT THAT A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT BE SUBMITTED TO STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall not exercise the additional borrowing authority provided under subsection (b) until the Archivist of the United States transmits to the States H.J. Res. 1 in the form reported on June 23, 2011, S.J. Res. 10 in the form introduced on March 31, 2011, or H.J. Res. 56 in the form introduced on April 7, 2011, a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, or a similar amendment if it requires that total outlays not exceed total receipts, that contains a spending limitation as a percentage of GDP, and requires that tax increases be approved by a two-thirds vote in both Houses of Congress for their ratification.

(b) AMENDMENT TO TITLE 31.—Effective on the date the Archivist of the United States transmits to the States H.J. Res. 1 in the form reported, S.J. Res. 10 in the form introduced, or H.J. Res. 56 in the form introduced, a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, or a similar amendment if it requires that total outlays not exceed total receipts, contains a spending limitation as a percentage of GDP, and requires tax increases be approved by a two-thirds vote in both Houses of Congress for their ratification, section 3101(b) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking the dollar limitation contained in such subsection and inserting \$16,700,000,000,000.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) each will control 2 hours.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ), a member of the Budget Committee, control 30 minutes; the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT), the vice chair of the Budget Committee, control 30 minutes; and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN) control 30 minutes of debate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. With respect to the remaining time, I will reserve the balance of my time and turn it over to the gentleman from Utah.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, today is an historic day. We have an opportunity in this body to send a strong signal to the country that we're going to live within our means. At the heart of this discussion is a discussion about whether or not our country is going to live within its means.

What we ask for at the heart of this proposal is that we balance our budget. It's something that families do. It's something that businesses do. A balanced budget amendment is something that 49 States across the country have.

Unfortunately, in Congresses past, Presidents past, we have not lived within our means. I have heard the argument that says, Oh, we don't need a constitutional amendment; we just need to do our job.

Madam Speaker, we find this Nation more than \$14 trillion in debt. We're paying more than \$600 million a day in interest on that debt. Now imagine, imagine the United States of America without that debt. We don't get anything for that \$600 million. But it's an obligation. We need to live up to those obligations.

What this bill says is very simple:

We're going to cut. We're going to make an immediate cut to some spending, a paltry \$11 billion in the first year. Number two, we're going to cap as a percentage of our gross domestic product the amount of money that we're going to spend going forward so that there are targets in place for future Congresses to consider and weigh and make the good decisions that need to be made. How are we going to prioritize things? And, number three, we are going to seek to have a balanced budget amendment come to the floor of the House, come to the Senate, and pass both bodies.

If we can make that historic move and pass to the States a balanced budget amendment, then we will solve the underlying challenge that faces this country: We are spending too much money. I think everybody understands that. But the question is: Are we really going to do something about it?

The question for the President, the question for this body moving forward, is: Do we have the fortitude to actually put before the States an amendment? That's all we ask. Can the States have a say in this?

To my Senate colleagues, Madam Speaker, I would encourage them, they are to represent the States. What are they afraid of if they won't send a balanced budget amendment forward for their ratification?

We have to change the way we do business in Washington, D.C. America gets it. America understands it. But this body, in its history, has not lived up to that call. The future of our Nation depends upon it.

There is going to be all kinds of rhetoric about how we're cutting Medicare. It's not true. It simply says we're going to have to put ourselves on a glide path to get some fiscal sanity back here.

Now, there is a timetable that is before us. We're going to run out of money. We're spending money we don't have. But there is a timetable before us. And so in just 2 weeks, we're going to come upon this deadline. This is a real plan that can solve the problem and something that should be widely embraced on both sides of the aisle.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, this is no time for this body to be playing dangerous games with the American economy and with American jobs, and yet that's exactly what's going on on the floor of this House today. Our Republican colleagues are taking the position that unless and until we accept their radical budget plan, they will prevent the United States from paying its bills.

And what does their budget plan do? Yes, it is the same old plan to end the Medicare guarantee, to slash Medicaid, to cut education while protecting special interest tax breaks, like subsidies for Big Oil companies.

And here's what they're saying: Unless we do that, unless we take that, they're going to prevent the United States from paying its bills.

Remember, these are bills that are coming due on actions that this Congress has already taken. These are the bills to pay for two wars. These are bills to pay for the prescription drug plan that was never paid for. And one of the primary reasons we don't have enough revenue coming in to pay those bills is because of the tax cuts in 2001 and 2003 that disproportionately benefited the very wealthy.

It's interesting to hear some of our Republican colleagues who have been here for that entire period of time and voted on all those things saying that it's a sacrifice for them to accept responsibility and pay the bills for the things they voted for. Imagine if the American people took that position.

And what are the consequences of the United States failing to pay its bills? The same thing that would happen to an American family that decided not to pay its bills, whether it's its mortgage, its car payment, whatever it might be. It would undermine the creditworthiness of that American family.

And taking that action will undermine the creditworthiness of the United States. That will lead to a rise in interest rates and a sinking economy. It would hurt every American family. And it would increase—the deficit—the deficit of the United States. That is the result our Republican colleagues are threatening in this bill if their demands are not met.

So let's dig a little deeper into those demands. As I say, what they want to do is impose the same budget plan that they voted on earlier in this House and we debated. It does end the Medicare guarantee, it does slash Medicaid and education, and it does protect corporate tax loopholes. Only this time it's worse, because they want to take that budget plan and implant it in the Constitution of the United States.

Now, nobody in this body should be fooled for one moment. This is not an ordinary balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. We can have that debate, and there are legitimate arguments. This does something very different and very sinister. It manipulates the Constitution of the United States in a way to graft the Republican budget plan into the Constitution. How does it do it? There are two devices, and the gentleman knows them well.

□ 1450

The first is, it says you can cut Medicare, you can cut Social Security, you can cut education, with a majority vote. But if you want to cut a subsidy for a Big Oil company for the purposes of reducing the deficit, if you want to

cut corporate jet loopholes for the purpose of reducing the deficit, that's not a majority vote. That's a supermajority, two-thirds vote. So it biases the Constitution itself in a manner that prefers cuts to Medicare beneficiaries who have a median income of under \$22,000 before asking the very wealthiest in our country to return to the same tax rates that were in place during the Clinton administration.

Secondly, it says, we have to pass a constitutional amendment in the next 2 days that also includes an overall cap on spending. And if you look at the bill that came out of the Judiciary Committee, what that would impose is an 18 percent cap. Maybe 18 percent, maybe 19 percent in the end, we don't know, but you have to have a cap. And the one that's come out so far has an 18 percent cap.

Now, let's put that number into context. Not since 1966, just after we enacted Medicare to protect our senior citizens from health crisis, not since that time has the United States met that level of expenditures. We've been over that level of expenditures. So by putting that cap on, combined with the provision to make it easier to cut Medicare than it is to cut corporate tax subsidies, they are writing into the Constitution itself this bias. They're stacking the constitutional deck in favor of engrafting their budget plan into our founding document.

Now, I heard the gentleman say, and we hear it many times, and I hope we won't hear it again on this floor today, 49 of the 50 States have balanced budget amendments. That's true. But they don't have this kind of balanced budget amendment. They don't have balanced budget amendments with these pernicious features, with some exceptions.

Fourteen States have a supermajority requirement written into their constitution. For a good number of those, it's less than two-thirds, which is what this would require. Sixteen States write into their Constitution spending caps, and only seven States in the country combine the two.

So let's not talk about how every State can balance the budget, an argument which also ignores the reality that the Federal Government is not just any old State. It is the Federal Government of the United States of America. It needs to be able to respond to emergencies and wars and the like.

So let me close with this, Madam Speaker. We do need to, number one, make sure we pay our bills; and, number two, we need to get our deficits under control in a way that helps our economy, not hurts it. And that's why the President of the United States put forward a proposal that is modeled on the framework that was put forward by the Simpson-Bowles commission. It doesn't have every detail in it, but it adopts that framework that says let's cut the deficit by approximately \$4 trillion over the next 10 years. Let's do it in a balanced way. In fact, it's tilted toward spending cuts—\$3 of spending

cuts for every dollar in revenue. He makes it very clear he wants to get the revenue, closing some of these corporate tax loopholes, asking the top 2 percent of income earners in the United States to just go back to the rates they were paying during the Clinton administration, a time we all remember when the economy was booming and we created 20 million jobs.

So let's take a balanced approach to this. Let's not take the position that if our demands are not met, if we can not manipulate the Constitution of the United States to engraft our budget plan into that founding document, then we're going to let the United States fail to pay its bills and suffer the terrible economic consequences. It's not so much Members in this body that will be suffering those; it's the American people. Let's not do that to the American people.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I would ask the gentleman if he could give us a copy of that plan right now here during this debate, we would certainly appreciate it.

The second thing is what we're talking about is a balanced budget. That's really what we're talking about.

I now yield 1 minute to our leader, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR).

Mr. CANTOR. Madam Speaker, it is time to be honest with the American people. At a time when our government borrows 40 cents of every dollar it spends, we have got no choice but to cut spending and begin living within our means.

Contrary to what the gentleman on the other side of the aisle continues to say, no one, no one wants to bring default onto our country. And with millions of Americans out of work, we've got to focus on getting the economy growing again.

We, as Republicans, as the new majority in this House, as the gentleman from Maryland knows, have put a plan on the table that ensures Washington does not continue to spend money it doesn't have. House Republicans have a plan to cut, cap, and balance our way to prosperity. This commonsense legislation provides a straightforward plan to curb our massive debt and to finally begin to limit spending.

The legislation before us would require, one, a balanced budget component; two, a supermajority requirement to raise taxes on the American people; and, three, a limit on spending as a percentage of GDP.

Madam Speaker, today the House has the opportunity to show the people that sent us here that we are serious about turning the page on the failed fiscal policies that this town has been about over the last several decades and begin to get the fiscal house in order.

House Republicans were voted into office to change the culture in Washington, and we will not support the other side's request or the President's request to increase the debt limit without meaningful reforms to the system.

Forty-nine States, including my home State of Virginia, already have a balanced budget requirement, and it's time that the Federal Government reflect the same policy to get our fiscal house in order. Cut, Cap, and Balance makes sure that we begin to treat taxpayer dollars more responsibly, just like families and businesses do with their own budgets.

We need to act today. We cannot continue to kick the can down the road.

Madam Speaker, the President continues to say, as the gentleman on the other side tries to imply as well, that they want to do big things. We do as well, as evidenced by our budget that we put on the table. But we implore the other side to get serious. Let's do big things. Let's get our fiscal house in order. But let's do so without imposing higher taxes on the small business people that we so desperately need to start hiring again.

And the gentleman from Maryland loves to talk about those corporate loopholes. He loves to talk about corporate jet owners and the kind of preferences that exist in the Code. The gentleman from Maryland knows all too well, he and I were in discussions for almost 7 weeks when I said, again and again, that we would be happy to engage in a discussion of tax reform to get rid of those loopholes. The gentleman also knows that those loopholes and the costs associated with those loopholes pale in comparison to the problem.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CANTOR. I will not yield.

So I know it makes for good politics to go throw the shiny ball out there, Madam Speaker, that somehow Republicans are wed to that kind of policy to sustain these preferences, when all along, in our budget and in our plan, we have said we are for tax reform. We have said we are for bringing down rates on everybody.

And that's it, Madam Speaker. Let's get serious and stop playing politics. It's not about that. There is no disagreement that any of us want to support those loopholes.

But what's really going on, Madam Speaker, in all of the debt discussion, in all of the negotiation, is the fact that the minority and its party and the President continue to insist that we raise taxes on the small business people that we need so desperately to begin creating jobs and hiring people again.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I wish the gentleman had yielded because I think it would have become very clear that the Republican position is they won't close a tax loophole that generates one penny for deficit reduction, not one penny.

□ 1500

So you can't close a corporate jet loophole if it's going to deficit reduction. You can't say to the oil and gas companies we're going to end your subsidy if it's going to go for deficit reduction. We all know there are a lot of

Washington lobbyists that manipulate the Tax Code around here. Getting a tax break, a taxpayer giveaway to the Tax Code, is just like getting something through spending, and yet our Republican colleagues refuse to allow any cut in a loophole to go to deficit reduction, not one penny.

Again, we heard it from the majority leader, we're going to hear it I guess all day, 49 out of 50 States have balanced budget amendments. This is not the kind of balanced budget amendment States have. This writes into the Constitution of the United States again a preference for cutting Medicare and Social Security—that requires a majority vote—but in order to close one of those corporate tax loopholes for the purpose of reducing the deficit you need a two-thirds vote. You're going to imbed into the Constitution of the United States those policy preferences. That is exactly what this does.

So let's not hear about the 49 States. They don't all have these spending caps, and they don't all have that preference protecting special interest tax breaks from use for deficit reduction.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to our distinguished leader of the Democratic Caucus, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON).

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise to associate myself with the remarks of the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN).

Let me say that in his opening comments I think he has laid it out pretty well. Cut, cap and balance—one has to resist on our side the notion that this is cut, cap, and get rid of Medicare.

The public has had it with this theater of the absurd that's going on. They want Congress to come together, as our President has suggested, and do the most important thing that we can—create jobs for the American people.

At Augie & Ray's in my hometown, people ask me, what's going on? Seems like a light beer commercial where there is this endless quibbling back and forth, with people on both sides of the aisle who care deeply about their country but seem to do little about putting the Nation back to work.

We face a crisis with a debt ceiling, a debt ceiling that 17 times under Ronald Reagan was lifted without any bill being held hostage, and clearly not programs like Medicare and Social Security. This is a time for us to come together and reason in a rational process. There are no immediate tax impositions placed by the President—all of you who have been in negotiations understand and know that. In fact, this Congress, when we were in the majority, passed the largest tax cut for the middle class.

I continue to believe that the people in my home town have it right, that the issue is about jobs. We cannot take this Nation up to the precipice, up to the cliff again and risk endangerment of default. As Ronald Reagan said, this

would be a catastrophe for this country to allow this to take place. We need to stay at the table and continue to negotiate around the idea of jobs, taking a look at those things strategically that can be cut that create jobs, and those revenues that can be enhanced to create jobs to put the American people back to work. That's what the American people want to see, the Congress that can come together.

I stand by our President and by this great chairman in making sure that we don't go through this theater of the absurd. You know that this is not a true balanced budget amendment. You know that in your heart. You have talented and good people on your side, as do we. Let's be about putting America back to work and create jobs. Let's not talk about defaulting on the Nation. We're defaulting on the American people. Let's talk about putting them back to work. That's what we need to do in this Nation.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. For 2 years under Barack Obama, the Democrats had the House and Senate and the Presidency, you didn't do a thing to touch those so-called "loopholes." To try to feign how exasperated you are at this point is somewhat disingenuous to somebody who sat here for 2 years with you having the House, the Senate, and the Presidency and doing nothing about it.

What we're fighting for is more taxpayers, not more taxes. When the President said he was going to veto this bill, it provided a whole lot of clarity to a guy like me. Because if we can't find common ground on balancing the budget—how dare we offer that we want to balance the budget? That's all we ask for in this country, is put us on a trajectory to balance the budget.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind Members that all remarks should be addressed to the Chair.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE), the chairman of the House Policy Committee.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I'll tell you, my friend talks about the theater of the absurd. I'll tell you what's absurd: It's saying that they have a plan when they have no plan at all. That is what's absurd.

That we are here today dealing with this challenge ought not be a surprise to anybody. Decade after decade, Congress after Congress, President after President, they have borrowed too much, spent too much, and taxed too much, which is why our new majority—now just over 6 months in office—has put forward positive, substantive proposals to change the way that Washington does business. It's exactly what America is demanding.

Our challenges are huge, but solutions based upon principle is exactly what is needed, and hence this current bill, with short-term, midterm and

long-term solutions. In the short term, responsible, appropriate spending reductions. In the midterm, limit and control Federal spending as a percent of gross domestic product. And in the long term, stop the madness. Force Washington to do what every single family in this country does and every single business in this country does, and that is to balance our budget.

President Obama has issued a veto threat, saying essentially that balancing the budget is an unrealistic policy goal. This is an administration that says it wants to do big things. Mr. President, is getting our debt and deficit under control too much to ask? Is that too big, Mr. President? What is unrealistic is to assume that we can spend at the levels that President Obama and congressional Democrats have done over the past few years, amass trillion-dollar annual deficits, and still have a vibrant economy. Now that's unrealistic. Putting America's fiscal house in order is not only realistic and achievable, it's imperative; it's imperative in order to get our economy moving again and create jobs.

This bill is a positive solution, a commonsense solution, an honest solution, and a bold solution. I encourage my colleagues to support this bill and begin to travel on a path to prosperity.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I just want to make a couple of points in response to statements that have been raised.

Not only would this write in the Constitution a two-thirds requirement for getting rid of special interest tax breaks for the purposes of deficit reduction, it would make it easier to create new special interest tax loopholes than to eliminate them. If a Washington lobbyist is pushing for a big special break, you can do that with a majority vote under this constitutional amendment. But if you want to eliminate one of those special interest tax loopholes, whoops, you need a two-thirds vote.

Now let's be very clear on what the President has said. Yes, we want to close those corporate loopholes. He has also been very clear that beginning in 2013 we should go back to asking the very top income earners to pay the same rates they were paying during the Clinton administration, which, as I said, was a time when the economy was booming. Now every time we mention that fact we hear our Republican colleagues talk about small business and how they're going to protect small business. When you hear that language, you really know that they're using that as cover to protect some of these big special interests.

□ 1510

Why do I say that? We agree that small businesses are the engine of this economy; but if you look at the Joint Tax Committee report, July 12, non-partisan, they say that 3 percent of all businesses would even be impacted—

only 3 percent. Less than 3 percent of all businesses would be impacted by the President's proposal, those that file as S corporations. And then it goes on to provide a warning here, specifically saying beware because these entities might not be "small," in quotes.

In fact, they say in 2005, over 12,000 S corporations and 6,000 partnerships had receipts of more than \$50 million. Among those are KKR and Pricewaterhouse. Now these are all good businesses, but I would ask my colleagues whether they are small businesses. And let's not use the rhetoric of small businesses to protect preferences for the big guys.

We all need to share responsibility for getting this deficit under control. We need a balanced approach to doing that.

With that, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. SCHWARTZ), my colleague on the Budget Committee.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments of the ranking member and this discussion.

Let me be very clear. Let me start by just saying that Republicans continue to play politics rather than do what is best for this country, particularly to do what is responsible at a critical time for our Nation. They are once again holding American families and American businesses hostage by threatening to allow the United States to default on our debt, to not meet our responsibilities until their extreme ideological demands are met.

Their plan is not a balanced approach to what is right for our country. It ends the Medicare guarantee for our seniors. Let me repeat that: It ends the Medicare guarantee for our seniors. And it slashes educational opportunities for the next generation of Americans. It inhibits our ability to foster an environment for private sector economic growth by cutting any chance of investment in scientific research and technology, in roads, bridges and highways, and in access to higher education, to the very, very kinds of actions we need to take to establish an atmosphere for private sector growth in this Nation, whether large or small business.

The Republican plan is disastrous at a very fragile time in our economic recovery. It will devastate America's future economic competitiveness. The Republican majority has yet to produce legislation that puts the American economy back on track and Americans back to work.

This legislation guarantees that we won't meet our obligations of the Nation to our seniors or to our children, and it would dramatically reduce our ability to compete in a global economy. Make no mistake, the Republican plan is, and always has been, to cut Social Security and Medicare, to cap economic opportunity, and to balance the budget on the backs of middle class families.

Cut, Cap, and Balance is bad for American families, bad for American

businesses, and bad for our Nation's economy now and into the future. We should not let it pass.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Speaker, the only thing Cut, Cap, and Balance is bad for is for Members of Congress because we are going to actually rein in spending. They're actually going to have to live within a balanced budget.

I would also highlight rule XXI, section 5(b). I have heard a lot of rhetoric in the news and other places about how there is going to be such a higher standard. It should be noted that the passage of a tax rate increase, a bill or joint resolution, amendment, or conference report carrying a Federal income tax rate increase may not be considered as passed or agreed to unless so determined by a vote of not less than three-fifths of the Members voting.

It was that same standard and threshold when NANCY PELOSI was the Speaker of the House as it is today, so we have had that higher standard for raising taxes. That is nothing new.

At this time, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RIBBLE), a freshman Member.

Mr. RIBBLE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act of 2011.

To put our Nation back on the path to prosperity, government needs to truly live within its means, and that means Congress must be required to pass budgets that spend the same amount of money that comes in.

Just last weekend, S&P announced they were reviewing America's AAA bond rating. They warned if Congress and the President could not reach an agreement to structurally reform our spending and debt problems, not just raising the debt ceiling, our country will face a risk of having its bond rating downgraded. This will not only result in higher borrowing rates for individuals and businesses, but also stifle new job creation and capital investment. We simply cannot allow this to happen.

A few days ago, President Obama said we have to eat our peas. Well, I couldn't agree more. Our bloated and obese Federal budget needs a healthy and balanced diet, one that trims the fat of overspending and grows the muscle of our Nation's economy. And that's exactly what H.R. 2560 does. It provides a balanced approach to our Nation's fiscal problems, and there is nothing more balanced than a balanced budget. There is nothing more American than permitting the States and, more importantly, the American people to have a voice in the direction this Nation will take. There is nothing more prudent than stepping forward and leading today so our children and grandchildren will have a better future tomorrow.

The future of our country is on the line; and if this body wants to ensure a brighter, more prosperous future for our children and grandchildren, we must fundamentally change Washington's spending habits.

It is time to cut up the Federal credit card and stop placing this government's out-of-control spending habits onto the backs of future generations. This bill does exactly that. I am proud to support it.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, the sponsor of the bill mentioned some House rules. I think he is well aware that you can always waive House rules by majority vote. Thank goodness you cannot just waive the Constitution of the United States. Our Founders made it difficult to get bad ideas into the Constitution. Again, I want to make it clear, this is not your garden-variety balanced budget amendment. This is manipulating the Constitution of the United States itself in a way that makes it easier to cut Medicare, easier to cut Social Security, and easier to cut education than it is to cut corporate tax loopholes for the purpose of reducing the deficit.

With that, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM), a member of the Budget Committee.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, the bill on the floor right now is a political gimmick. It is a stunt. It is not a serious effort. But this bill does reflect Republican values. This Republican bill protects the wealthiest Americans. This Republican bill pummels seniors and the middle class. And, no surprise, this bill panders, even grovels to the Tea Party extremists.

This bill will end the Medicare guarantees. This bill will kill jobs. And, thank goodness, this bill will never pass the United States Senate. This bill will never become law.

The Republican majority is wasting precious time as the clock ticks and ticks closer to default and economic disaster. The Republican majority is choosing to bring America to the brink of default for reasons that have everything to do with politics and nothing to do with reasonable governing. The American people reject the Tea Party's dangerous brand of Armageddon economics. It is time to take responsibility for paying America's bills and raise the debt ceiling without Tea Party gimmicks and games.

This Congress needs to take a serious stand and get busy creating jobs and putting people back to work and getting this economy growing. Let's end the debate on this radical legislation right now. Let's get to the real work of cutting deficits, creating jobs, and growing the economy.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FLORES), a member of the House Budget Committee.

Mr. FLORES. Madam Speaker, on July 15, 2011, just 4 days ago, President Obama said, "We don't need a constitutional amendment to do our jobs." But the President clearly does. Let's go through the facts which the other side has conveniently forgotten.

In the 30 months that he has been President, a short 30 months, he has

added almost \$4 trillion to our national debt. That is \$133 billion a month, \$3.1 million per minute, \$51,000 per second.

We have seen the destruction of Medicare through the enactment of ObamaCare, making Medicare insolvent by more than \$60 trillion. You want to talk about Medicare destruction, you can look right over here and see Medicare destruction.

We have almost 40 million Americans on food stamps, the most ever. We have spent \$1 trillion on a stimulus plan, but we still have one out of every six working-age Americans either underemployed or unemployed.

□ 1520

This is what Mr. Obama calls “winning the future.” That’s what he threatened in his veto of Cut, Cap, and Balance.

He wants to win the future. Mr. Obama, you’re not winning the future. You’re not winning anything. The Obama plan for our country is tax, spend, and regulate; not winning the future.

More taxes mean fewer jobs. More spending and more debt: fewer jobs and less economic growth. More regulation: fewer jobs, less economic growth.

And with the Obama plan, there’s more. You get to have gasoline prices that are double what they were when he was inaugurated. But there is a real plan to correct this.

Cut, Cap, and Balance takes away the blank check that this Congress has exercised for decades and that this President clearly seems to enjoy. It’s time we stopped the blank check spending now and take the necessary steps to force Washington to act responsibly and live within its means just like my constituents in Texas do already. It’s time for Cut, Cap, and Balance.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. FLORES. When I was sworn in, my constituents gave me a stamp that said: Non-Sufficient Funds, Denied By Taxpayers. Mr. Obama, your plan is denied by taxpayers.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, when we were all sworn in, we were also sworn to protect the Constitution of the United States, not manipulate the Constitution of the United States to protect special interest tax breaks for oil and gas companies or other special interests by implanting into that document a requirement that two-thirds of this body and the Senate have to vote to get rid of them for purposes of deficit reduction.

I also think that while we’re all entitled to our own opinions, we’re not entitled to our own facts. If you look at the Medicare trustees’ report, it will indicate that the health care reform

bill extended the life of the trust fund, and we also did it by getting rid of the overpayments to some of the Medicare Advantage plans that were being paid at 114 percent of what other plans were being paid for. Taxpayers were oversubsidizing those plans, as were Medicare recipients.

With that, I yield 3 minutes to a terrific member of the Budget Committee, the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. I thank the ranking member of the committee for yielding.

Madam Speaker, there is not a single person in this Chamber who doesn’t want to balance the budget, but the legislation before us today is not about that. It is about enshrining a particularly radical interpretation of the Republican agenda into the foundational document, a precious document, our Constitution, that guides our system of government.

If successful, it would put in place a cap on Federal spending at 18 percent of GDP, turning back the clock more than half a century to the glory days of 1966. Though it makes for a great press release, why didn’t anyone else think of this solution? Even President Reagan never once requested a Federal budget that spent nearly this low.

Well, to begin with, our population is much larger and much older on average than it was in 1966. Some see that as a problem. Seniors are expensive, they say. I suppose that’s one way of looking at it. And if all you’re worried about is how much Grandma’s nursing home care costs, then this is the bill for you. But since 1966, Grandma is living, on average, nearly 10 years longer. There is no price you can place on that, and there is no question that it’s because she’s getting a guaranteed level of health care.

This bill, according to their own leaders, enshrines the Republican plan to end Medicare in the United States Constitution. Right there, after the freedom of religion, the freedom of thought, the freedom of assembly, we can have the freedom from health care after age 65.

This is nothing more than a political stunt, a gimmick that would change the fundamental rules of our democratic system so our Republican colleagues can make it easier to end Medicare and more difficult to cut tax giveaways to millionaires, to billionaires and their friends in Big Oil.

Let’s stop this nonsense and get back to work. Let’s stop the nonsense that is playing games with America’s working families. They promote this as a way to fiscal sanity, but, rather, it’s a lack of investment in sanity. It’s an assault on our children, our families, our veterans, our seniors. Let’s put America back to work. Let’s invest in those opportunities and reduce the deficit as we move forward. Enough with the foolish gimmicks.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I love that: foolish gimmicks, balancing our budget.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE).

(Mr. GOODLATTE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOODLATTE. I rise in strong support of the Cut, Cap, and Balance legislation. I commend the gentleman from Utah and all the others who have brought this forward, and here’s why, right here:

We had a vote here on the floor of this House a few weeks ago about the President of the United States’ request: just give me a clean debt limit increase. Every single Republican and nearly a majority of the Democrats voted to do the opposite, to not give him a debt limit increase.

This shows us why we are here today with Cut, Cap, and Balance legislation. This is the track that the Democrats have us on right now. This is the track we would be on if the President had gotten his wish for a debt limit increase without any spending cuts, without any caps on future spending, and without what 80 percent of the American people want, which is a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution.

This green line is what we’re voting on today. This is what the House budget, already adopted by this institution and that we’re operating under right now with our appropriations bills, this is what would put us on a target to not only balance the budget but also to pay off the \$14 trillion national debt that we are faced with right now, that our children and grandchildren are faced with, that the future of our economy is faced with right now.

This is the choice that we have here today. Take care of the debt limit. Don’t default on our obligations. No one here wants to do that. But also cut spending, cap spending, and pass a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution.

In 1995, we came within one vote in the United States Senate, after the House of Representatives cast 300 bipartisan votes for a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution, and now we have the opportunity to lay the groundwork to do it again, but this time to succeed; and we have much, much greater reason to do that because of the fact that we are faced with this mountain of red ink that we can turn into a bright future for America.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, we have been making a point that this is not your garden variety constitutional amendment. This is—

Mr. GOODLATTE. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I will yield on your time, Mr. GOODLATTE, and I’m happy when you have some time to do that.

In fact, I think you’re going to want an opportunity, because the gentleman from Virginia was asked at the hearing

on his proposal for a constitutional amendment, which was voted out of the committee, to identify one budget that would meet the requirements of their version, this version of the constitutional amendment, and it was pointed out that even the draconian—

Mr. GOODLATTE. Will the gentleman yield for a question?

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I will not yield on my time.

The gentleman pointed out that not even the Republican budget that passed the House, that ends the Medicare guarantee and is draconian, not even that would meet those requirements, that the budget that would meet those requirements was that passed by the Republican Study Group, which is like the Republican plan on steroids. In fact, a lot of Members on the Republican side decided that was way overboard. That would require slashes in things like Medicare and Social Security even more than the Republican budget that passed the House.

So that is the one budget that was identified as meeting the requirements of that constitutional amendment. This is not a simple constitutional amendment. They know that that's a popular idea.

□ 1530

So they're dressing up their particular version of it in that language, talking about 49 out of 50 States have this. Again, two devices: One, super-majority; a two-thirds vote required to cut corporate tax loopholes when only a simple majority is required to cut Medicare and Social Security. We don't think things like that belong in the Constitution of the United States.

I yield 3 minutes to a distinguished member of the Budget Committee, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BASS).

Ms. BASS of California. I would like to thank the ranking member of the Budget Committee, of which I'm very proud to be a member.

I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2560. I have to tell you, Madam Speaker, that to me it feels like Groundhog Day again here in the House of Representatives. "Duck, dodge, and dismantle" is brought to the floor today for a vote. I have to tell you that I've seen this movie before. The storyline rewards the ultrawealthy while punishing working families.

I served as Speaker of the California Assembly while my State staggered from budget crisis to budget crisis. We cut spending drastically—from \$110 billion to \$83 billion. But every year, California is subject to national ridicule. Why does California have this problem? Well, Madam Speaker, we have a balanced budget requirement in California. We require a two-thirds vote to raise revenue. We can pass tax loopholes and breaks on a simple majority vote.

So how is that working for us in California? Well, I'd like to invite my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to

come to California. Every year the State is held hostage. Every year my Republican colleagues attempt to have a cap that is passed similar to the cap that is proposed in this legislation. And every year the State reaches the brink of a shutdown. So why on Earth would we want to import the dysfunction from California to the Nation?

We should be dealing with the debt ceiling free and clear. We should not force a default in order to bring about legislation that is not related to the debt ceiling. Our government should not pick winners and losers, which is exactly what will happen if we don't raise the debt ceiling—whether veterans should be paid, if IRS refunds can be honored, if Pell Grants will be available, and if food stamps can be distributed. And that's exactly what would happen if the debt limit is not raised.

I urge a "no" vote on this bill.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Speaker, I believe the gentleman said he would answer a question if we asked it on our time. The question I have for the gentleman is: Would you support any balanced budget amendment? Is there any balanced budget amendment that you would support?

I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I would be happy to entertain a debate.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. It's just a "yes" or "no."

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Here's the question—

Mr. CHAFFETZ. It's a simple "yes" or "no."

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Let me just say this. I would not want to prevent the United States from being able to respond in cases of war, in national emergency.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Reclaiming my time—

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I'm happy to work with the gentleman on that enterprise, but that's very different than what you're talking about.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Reclaiming my time, I will now yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Tennessee, DIANE BLACK, who is here as a freshman in the House of Representatives.

Mrs. BLACK. Last week, President Obama got up on his bully pulpit and he told the House Republicans it was "time to eat our peas" as a part of the debt deal. The President said that to us, yet he has not come forward with a detailed written plan of his own. All we hear from the White House is about job-killing tax increases and a mystical dollar amount of cuts with no actual concrete figures on how to achieve it. The President has yet to put his plan on the table, even though the Congress has been asking for a scorable plan from him for months. In fact, he did not even respond to a request from myself and 76 of our freshman members who wrote to him and asked him over a month ago to come to the table and put pen to paper. And yet, even in the absence of a plan from the White

House, the President is now threatening to veto a cut, cap, and balance before it was even brought to the floor for debate.

And this isn't the first time that the President has rejected a good plan put together by the House of Representatives. Not only did the House provide a plan in the Path to Prosperity, our House Republican budget, but here we are today, about to vote on Cap, Cut, and Balance, which represents a solution to the current debt ceiling debate. For someone who claims he wants to solve this issue, he has rejected every good proposal that has come his way.

Mr. President, it is time to eat your peas.

I urge my colleagues to vote for Cut, Cap and Balance.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will once again remind Members, very gently, to address their remarks to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I would just remind my colleagues that the President has put on the table a balanced approach to reducing the deficit. It would cut about \$4 trillion from the deficit over the next 10 to 12 years. It's a balanced approach, again, based on the overall framework of the bipartisan Simpson-Bowles Commission. It calls for \$3 in spending cuts for \$1 in revenue. It would be raised after 2013 by closing special interest tax loopholes and asking the folks at the very top to go back to the same rates that were in place during the Clinton administration. That's what the President said.

It's hard to have a conversation when the other party to the negotiations takes the position that they will not allow one cent from closing a corporate tax loophole to go for the purposes of deficit reduction. And now we see them trying to enshrine within the Constitution a limitation on our ability to get rid of those special interest tax loopholes. They would now require a two-thirds vote. That is a Washington lobbyist's dream in the Constitution.

I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished ranking member of the Small Business Committee, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Thank you, Ranking Member, for yielding.

Madam Speaker, as we debate how to avert the default crisis, we should acknowledge what got us into the current mess. The real reason that the United States faces this dilemma dates back to a series of irresponsible tax cuts: \$2.5 trillion in tax giveaways that were unpaid for and went disproportionately to the wealthiest Americans put us on this sustainable path.

We were told tax cuts would provide an economic boost. So what did we get for this enormous addition to the deficit? Was our economy strengthened? Were new jobs created? The answer is a resounding no. In fact, the median income for working families fell by 2.4 percent during the first 10 years these

tax cuts were in place—while food, housing, and other necessities became more expensive. Job creation plummeted to 33 new jobs a month, the lowest levels since President Hoover. The record is clear: Giving tax breaks to the wealthiest without paying for it ballooned our deficit but didn't create jobs.

Now, the proposal before us will not just continue this misguided policy of slash and burns, but make it worse. It won't create jobs for Americans but will slash services working families rely on. Make no mistake, America: This plan begins the dismantling of Medicare and Social Security. Meanwhile, subsidies for big oil companies and tax breaks for billionaires will be locked in. Most of all, at a time when our economy is struggling, this bill will cost hundreds of thousands of American jobs. If you like 9 percent unemployment, you will love this bill.

Vote against this bill. Stop playing pure politics. The American people deserve nothing less.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. We have 9 percent-plus unemployment, Madam Speaker. We've been north of that for a long time. And we're now also saddled with more than \$14 trillion in debt.

I would now like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD), who is on the Budget Committee.

Mr. LANKFORD. We have two distinctly different views. And it's not just Republican or Democrat views. One group sees the impending crisis as whether we're going to vote to increase the debt ceiling and all the crisis is based around August 2. The other group sees the crisis as the debt itself.

How you see the crisis will affect your view of how you choose to solve it. If the problem is the uncertainty around just this vote, then we do whatever it takes to get past August 2 and the problem is solved.

□ 1540

If the problem is the debt, when we raise the ceiling, we will face a debt approaching \$14 trillion with no strategy to pay off that debt. Our disaster is not averted. It has been accelerated.

As we know, just raising the debt limit does not solve the problem, as we've done that many times in the past. The economy that we have now is as a result of the actions that we've taken in the past to continually raise the debt ceiling over and over again with no plan to get out of it.

What if we raise the debt ceiling and agree to the President's oral plan that he has given of \$14 trillion, whatever that plan may be?

From the best we understand, Timothy Geithner made the statement in June that the plan is \$2 trillion in cuts over the next 10 years, \$1 trillion in tax increases and \$1 trillion in interest savings, whatever that means. If we accomplish that plan and do that and just raise the debt ceiling, we will then have a debt in 10 years of \$24 trillion

with still no plan to pay it off. That does not solve the debt crisis. That accelerates our debt crisis.

I have heard all day what a disaster it would be to balance our budget. Only in this room is it a disaster to balance the budget. I don't think Americans understand what we're talking about. I don't think they understand how out of touch we have really become that we would argue about balancing the budget. S&P and Moody's have both threatened to downgrade our debt, not because we're approaching August 2, but because we have no credible plan to ever pay this off.

Cut, Cap, and Balance gives us a credible framework from which, year after year, we will work to be able to resolve this debt, pay it down, and get back to balance.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, nobody is saying that we shouldn't balance our budget. We should balance our budget. In fact, the last time it was in balance was during the Clinton administration when they took a balanced approach to reducing the deficit, including having in place sufficient revenues from the folks at the very top to help cover our bills.

Then what happened in 2001–2003 is that we had back-to-back tax cuts that disproportionately benefited the very wealthy, which are a significant contributor to why there is now a mismatch between the bills we have to pay and the revenue coming in, which is why the President of the United States has said, Let's reduce the deficit. Let's do it in a balanced way. Let's do \$3 in cuts to \$1 in revenue.

I go back to the fact that the Republicans in the House want to insert in the Constitution of the United States a provision that would require a two-thirds vote to get rid of a special interest tax loophole for the purpose of deficit reduction. That kind of makes it difficult to have a balanced plan.

With that, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR).

Mr. FARR. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Last night, I was in a town hall meeting in California, and it was very clear. It was a bipartisan whole group of people, and what they told us very truly is, Stop playing games. They know that the United States Congress, since 1940, has voted over 90 times—90 times—to raise the debt and never once with a game, never once with preconditions of, Oh, we've got to do this. We've got to do that.

You guys are ruining this country's fiscal future by lighting a fire to our fiscal sanity and to our reputation. You want to take down our Constitution by requiring a two-thirds vote. You should look before you leap. California did this by initiative in 1990. That State has had a two-thirds vote locked up. It's impossible to get it out of any fiscal crisis, and it has dropped from the sixth wealthiest economy in the world.

Do you want to follow that lead by amending the U.S. Constitution and

locking in all these tax laws? You're just freezing in every single impropriety that's in the Tax Code.

These people in my town hall meeting said, Stop playing games. They said it because they don't think you should put conditionality on it. Vote for a clean debt limit. I did. Not one of you did it. Not one Republican voted for that. Shame on you. Shame on you for playing fire with the United States Constitution. Shame on you on the cut, cap, and ruin of the United States.

Vote "no."

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will, once again, remind the Members that remarks in debate must be addressed to the Chair and not to other Members in the second person.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Speaker, I can hear the chant on the other side with regard to the some 90 times the debt ceiling has been raised. That's the problem. I can hear the chant on the other side: One more time. One more time. One more time.

That's why we're in this mess. It's that Congresses in the past have not heeded the call. They have not said, "Enough is enough." Now, as our debt ceiling starts to reach a panic, we're going to get close to 100 percent of our gross domestic product.

Enough is enough.

I would now like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I was on record last night, speaking to the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act of 2011 and as to what the many merits are of this legislation. I think it is a fine bill, and I commend its consideration to those on the other side of the aisle; but I have to say the debate surrounding Cut, Cap, and Balance has a certain Alice in Wonderland character to it. It made me open up the old storybook just minutes ago and recall a favorite passage.

I recall Alice asks, "Would you tell me which way I ought to go from here?" to which the Cat responds, "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to."

Alice replies, "I don't much care where." Then of course the Cat says, "Then it doesn't matter which way you go."

I get the sense my good friends on the other side of the aisle don't really care where we go from here. They certainly don't care enough to put a specific plan forward themselves.

Unemployment remains at 9.2 percent. Investment in hiring remains sluggish all around this country, particularly in places like my southern Indiana district. Uncertainty reigns about future taxes, future interest rates, future inflation rates all because Washington continues to spend way too much money, often on things we don't need, but also on important public programs. We need to figure this out. We need to figure it out as a country. Our national debt is over \$14 trillion. It's

time we come forward with specific plans. Yet the other side still has no plan, seemingly no new ideas to offer to this debate, no solutions—only poll-tested rhetoric.

The American people deserve more than this during this critical time. Our markets certainly are asking for more than this. Standard & Poor's on July 14 said, "We may lower the long-term rating on the U.S. . . . if we conclude that Congress and the administration have not achieved a credible solution to the rising U.S. Government debt burden and are not likely to achieve one in the foreseeable future."

We need a plan. House Republicans have been putting forward plans. We put forward a plan already approved to close tax loopholes, something we've heard a lot about, in order to help create jobs by making the Tax Code flatter, fairer and simpler.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I yield the gentleman an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. We need a plan from the President. We need more certainty restored to these markets. Let's reject this Alice in Wonderland sort of leadership.

Don't bring me problems, I say to my colleagues. Bring me solutions. One solution is the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act, and I commend it for your consideration.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, the one surefire way that we're going to send interest rates up in this country and add to the cost of living for every American is if the United States doesn't pay its bills—bills for obligations that we've already taken on, which is what this is about. Some people, again, think it's a sacrifice to pay bills for actions and decisions that they've already supported and voted for. I would also point out that the Republican budget that passed the House and that would be put into this bill would require us to raise the debt ceiling by \$8 trillion between now and 2022. So let's not play this game with respect to paying our Nation's bills.

We have to do two things: We have to pay our Nation's bills—every family knows they have to pay their bills—and we have to come up with a deficit reduction plan.

The reality is the President has put a plan on the table. The reality is our Republican colleagues don't happen to like it because, as I said, for every \$3 in spending cuts, it would ask us to have \$1 in revenue from closing these special interest tax loopholes. Again, they want to manipulate the Constitution of the United States to protect those loopholes, to make it hard to get rid of them.

With that, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS).

(Mr. ANDREWS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

□ 1550

Mr. ANDREWS. Madam Speaker, the country has a job crisis. We have the same private sector jobs we did in 2001 and 14 percent more people looking for work. One of the ways to solve that job crisis, not the only way, is to try to keep interest rates stable and low so entrepreneurs can invest.

Today represents a terrible wasted opportunity. On the other side of this Capitol this very morning, three Democratic Senators and three Republican Senators came together and said they were ready to embrace a plan that begins by cutting spending about \$3 out of every \$4. It cuts social programs. It would cut defense, get us out of Iraq and Afghanistan. It would take a serious look at Medicare and Social Security, which are in many cases contributing to this deficit. And it would say that those who benefit from ethanol subsidies and oil company tax breaks, the wealthiest people in this country would have to pay a little bit more to pay their fair share.

Something like that is what should be on the floor here this afternoon because it can pass, the President can sign it, and it can solve the fiscal problems of this country or take a step in the right direction. But we don't have something like that. Instead, we have a plan that says the following and puts it in the Constitution:

The guy who runs an ethanol company who gets massive public subsidies to make profits is completely left alone. He doesn't have to do anything. But the woman who cleans his office at night is going to have to pay more to go to college, more for health care for herself, her children, and her parents, and more for just about anything else she wants in her life.

There is something wrong with that picture.

Sacrifice that is equitably and broadly shared is needed in this country, but a blind adherence to a special class of Americans who are so powerful and so entitled they pay nothing is the wrong way to go. And the last thing in the world we ought to do is put that error on the Constitution.

Vote "no" on this travesty.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Speaker, at any time we would love to see the Democrats' plan.

If you could actually slide it across the table to us, we would certainly appreciate it.

I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. HUELSKAMP).

(Mr. HUELSKAMP asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HUELSKAMP. A day like today does not come often, Madam Speaker. In only a handful of instances in our Nation's history has our Constitution been amended. There can not be a better or more urgent time for this House and the Senate and the United States of America to pass a constitutional amendment to balance the budget.

In a matter of only 2 years, non-defense discretionary spending has increased 84 percent and annual deficits have exceeded a trillion dollars for 3 straight years. And our debt has grown by nearly \$4 trillion since President Obama took office.

Let us think about cut, cap, and balance in a larger context. Let's think about who is really impacted by the out-of-control spending this legislation seeks to end.

In my home County of Meade County, Kansas, population 4,575, there was one birth announcement this week. On his birthday, that child received an IOU for nearly \$46,000 to the Federal Government, and that's before this President adds more to the country's debt burden.

Any request to increase the country's debt must be accompanied by a clear plan that will reduce the amount of money that a child born in Meade County, Kansas, owes to the politicians in Washington, D.C.

Let's cut spending now, cap spending in the future, and pass a balanced budget amendment and make history for all America's children. It is the right thing to do.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, as part of the plan the President has put on the table that would reduce the deficit by \$4 trillion over about 10 to 12 years, he has about a trillion dollars in cuts in discretionary spending. He does ask the Pentagon, which is the one agency that has never passed a GAO audit, to help contribute toward resolving that deficit problem. And he also does it without making deep cuts in critical investments for our country like education, like investment in infrastructure.

We're going to see in a couple of weeks a bill that may come out of the Transportation Committee that dramatically slashes infrastructure investments at a time when we have 20 percent unemployment in the construction industry.

So, yes, we have to make these cuts. The President's plan makes the cuts. But let's not take a hatchet to education investments. Let's not take a hatchet to investing in critical infrastructure, and let's not enshrine in the Constitution of the United States a preference for cutting Medicare and Social Security over cutting special interest tax loopholes. That's what this provision will do.

With that, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished vice chairman of the Democratic Caucus, the gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA).

Mr. BECERRA. Once again, the public is way ahead of the politicians. By nearly three to one, Americans reject this Republican budget scheme. In fact, nearly 70 percent of Americans disapprove of how Republicans are handling this deficit and default crisis. Even 51 percent of Americans who are registered Republicans disapprove of how congressional Republicans are handling these negotiations.

And by wide margins, Americans have sent a very clear signal to us in Congress here: Do not cut Medicare to pay for deficits that were caused by things like the Bush tax cuts to the wealthy and two unpaid-for wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Today, millions of Americans are living through tight budgets. As they sit at the kitchen table, they don't have the luxury of walking away from the tough choices as some in Congress have done. They know that they must balance today the needs that they have with the investments of tomorrow. That's why Americans would see straight through this cut-and-paste budget scheme.

Under this budget scheme, if an American family wanted to buy a house, guess what? You better have cash to pay for it, because you cannot borrow if you have to live under this budget scheme. No mortgages. If you want to send your child to college, you better have every single cent you need to send your child to college today to pay for the full cost of that tuition. No student loans because you could not borrow. So much for the American Dream for the American people.

Two hundred days into this Congress and not one bill yet from this House is enacted to put Americans back to work. And this proposal would eliminate hundreds of thousands of jobs almost immediately.

How are we going to get past the next 14 days if today, on this floor, we're debating a bill that we know will not pass in the Senate, that the President has said that he would veto? And in 14 short days, it's not an issue of paying our bills. It's a matter of watching the interest rates on people's mortgages skyrocket. It's a matter of watching the value of the dollar plummet. And it's a matter of watching People's retirement accounts or their 401(k) or IRA all of a sudden drop simply because people here in the House of Representatives decided to play politics. That's what this is about. And that's why, once again, the public is way ahead of the politicians.

Let's get to work. Let's stop leaving the negotiating table. Let's get this done. The President has said he is willing to go with a balanced approach. This gets us nowhere. We need to go somewhere, because America still has a long way to travel.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. It's always compelling, Mr. Speaker, when they have to use a poll to figure out how to do public policymaking. And to suggest that there would be no more mortgages is just fantasy. It's amazing what gets made up in this discussion instead of a serious discussion about balancing our books.

I would now like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. MULVANEY).

Mr. MULVANEY. I can't tell you how much I long for a discussion of ideas, an honest and open discussion of real ideas in this Chamber as opposed to

talking points. Clearly, we're not going to be getting that here this evening.

What we've heard so far is this bill is going to dismantle Medicare. I encourage my colleagues across the aisle to actually read the bill before they come in and talk about it. And page 4 specifically says we don't cut Medicare in this bill.

We've heard the President say that Social Security checks might not go out on August 3. That's just false. The President has every legal authority and the money available to him to send those checks out. If he wants to, those checks will go out on August 3.

We've heard the country will default on our debt if we don't raise the debt ceiling. Not true. The authority is there. The money is there. We have plenty of money with which to pay the interest on our debt. There will be no default on our debt.

We heard the President say he's going to cut \$4 trillion from spending. But when pressed on it, he admitted that the spending cuts this year were actually \$2 billion. Let's put that in perspective. Four trillion is \$4,000 billion, and the President admits that only \$2 billion of that is this year.

□ 1600

We've heard today from my colleagues on the other side, Mr. Speaker, "duck, dodge, and dismantle," which I think is somewhat ironic in that it was The Washington Post who actually accused the President in those exact same words of "ducking" his obligations with his 2012 budget. Talk about "dodging" responsibilities, it's now been 811 days since our colleagues in the Senate, controlled by the Democrats, have introduced any budget whatsoever. And if we want to talk about "dismantling," we can talk about replacing Medicare as we know it, which is exactly what has happened. The Medicare, as we have known it for generations, is gone and has been displaced and dismantled and replaced with an independent payment advisory board.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to real debates on real issues. I look forward to having conversations in this Chamber that are similar to the conversations that take place at every household, every business, every county, town, and State in this country about what our priorities are and how to spend money responsibly. We are not going to have that conversation in this Chamber until we pass Cut, Cap, and Balance.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I think the American families gathering around their tables do not have the option of not paying their bills on obligations they've already incurred. They can't say, Oh, it's okay to not pay my car payment, but I will pay my mortgage. They don't have that choice; and, frankly, the United States Government should not be saying that we're going to make those choices. We should be paying all our bills. And I would re-

mind my colleagues that the reason we have to raise the debt ceiling is for obligations that have already been incurred, votes that have already been taken. For example, two wars, an unfunded prescription drug bill, and the reality of two tax cuts that disproportionately benefited the very wealthy.

Now, I would urge my colleagues to read the bill. The section the gentleman referred to dealt with the sequestration. There's nothing in the bill that says not to cut Medicare or Social Security as part of reaching those targets. In fact, they're going to implant in the Constitution of the United States a spending level that we have not achieved since just after we passed Medicare.

So what they would do through this is call for deep cuts in Medicare. The numbers in this particular statutory provision track the budget that the Republicans passed off this floor. The CBO analyzed that. It looked at the impact on Medicare beneficiaries, and it's in a letter dated April 5, 2011, to the chairman of the Budget Committee, pointing out that under the Republican budget plan, Medicare beneficiaries will end up paying about 60 percent of the costs compared to 25 to 30 percent under Medicare today.

It's interesting that Members of Congress have written into the statute provisions that say for Members of Congress, we will have about 72 to 75 percent of our premiums and costs covered when we're saying to seniors on Medicare, let's put in these spending caps that will require you to pay a whole lot more.

With that, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN), a distinguished member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I thank the gentleman.

I would also like to thank our ranking member for carrying the flag here on our side and combating some of the misinformation that's coming out from the other side. And I know the other side certainly feels the same way.

But it's not the President saying all these things are going to happen if we do not address this issue. It's every economist on the planet, except for a few that may get paid by somebody who wants them to come up with another solution or another answer. So to pin this all on the President, to say that he's somehow hyping this, I think is not exactly true.

I think what the American people are seeing and what we're seeing now is that as we come to the end, as we get close to a solution to this problem, the House Republican Caucus says, Wait, we've got a solution. Let's change the Constitution. That is not a sincere effort to try to address this problem. We have had people negotiating this day in and day out. And to come in within days of us destabilizing the markets and say, Our solution is to change the Constitution of the United States, I think is inadequate.

I have heard several Members get up and talk about this debt in the last couple of years and everything else, completely ignoring the fact that our economy collapsed just 2 years ago. Just 2 years ago, the economy completely collapsed and collapsed, in part, because of the recklessness and the deregulation of Wall Street, taking the cops off the beat and letting all of these financial machinations continue to happen without any regulation at all. So to put up a placard that says, We need to reduce regulations on Wall Street, is a recipe to implement the same policies that got us into trouble in the first place.

And, lastly, I would just like to say I know this is called a balanced budget amendment, but the one thing that is not included is balance. When you look at the last 30 years, and you look at the accumulation of wealth that went from the middle class, wages being stagnant over 30 years, and the fact that in the late seventies, the top 1 percent of people in the country, the top 1 percent of the wealthiest, had 9 percent of real income in the late seventies. The top 1 percent now has 25 percent of real income in the country. The average CEO in the late sixties made \$48 for every \$1 the worker made. Today it's \$280.

To try to put into the Constitution of the United States an additional hurdle to try to ask those people who have benefited so greatly for being born in America and for generating wealth in America and having a court system and a military and transportation system available to them to make it harder to ask them to contribute to solve some of these problems, I think, is a real problem because at the same time you're making it easier, with your GDP number of 18 percent, to cut Medicare and to cut those programs that are investments here in the United States that keep this great system going.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, all we ask for is a balanced budget amendment. All we ask for is for people to live within their means. If you listen to the Democrats and what they suggest, just go ahead and spend more. Go ahead and keep racking it up on the credit card. There are no consequences. There are consequences.

I now yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. STUTZMAN).

Mr. STUTZMAN. I thank the gentleman from Utah for yielding.

Washington is broke, Mr. Speaker, and the American people know it, and they know how to get out of the mess that we're in.

I would like to reference back to August of 2009. The President visited my district in northern Indiana. He was visiting the city of Elkhart, Indiana. And during that press conference, he unleashed some very interesting statements. And a brave constituent of mine, Scott Ferguson, expressed his disappointment with taxes and asked the President to "explain how raising

the taxes on anyone during a deep recession is going to help with the economy." President Obama responded, "Normally you don't raise taxes in a recession, which is why we haven't and why, instead, cut taxes." So I guess what I would say to Scott is, his economics are right. And, Mr. President, I would agree with that.

Today we're hearing from the Democrats that we're paying for the Bush tax cuts. Well, I was elected last November but was here for 2 months when we voted to extend those Bush tax cuts which now I would refer to them as the Obama-Bush tax cuts. So I think it's important that we remember who we should be really pointing the finger at, that we should be pointing it at Washington. There's plenty of blame to go around.

I believe we are in a situation right now where we have a broken business. It is time for new leadership to come in and evaluate the situation. And what Republicans are proposing today is that we're going to give ourselves some breathing room with a debt ceiling increase. But more importantly, we are going to show the banker that we are not going to continue to borrow and spend, but we are going to change our spending habits and the way that we operate.

If we want to kick the can down the road and say we're not concerned about changing the way that we've operated, that's what the Democrat proposal is, just raise the debt ceiling without any reforms to our current budget process.

So I believe that this new leadership that we are seeing right here in this House is saying we've got to stop kicking the can down the road. Reform spending. Reform Washington.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, again, the President has said two things: Number one, America pays its bills for the obligations that it's incurred. Number two, he put a plan on the table to reduce the deficit by \$4 trillion; again, \$3 in spending cuts for \$1 of revenue.

I would point out to the gentleman, the President was very explicit. He said that the revenue component would begin in January of 2013; and in the meantime, he's actually proposed extending the payroll tax for another year during the year 2012 so that consumers would have more money to generate more demand in the economy, which is very fragile right now.

□ 1610

But make no mistake: Our long-term challenge is getting the economy going again and reducing our deficit, and the economy needs that to happen, and it should happen in a balanced way.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. NEAL. I rise in opposition to the "cut, cap, and balance ruse act." This is an ideologically extreme piece of legislation that will end Medicare as we know it, and it preserves tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans.

I guess some of our colleagues on the Republican side, when they're talking about balancing the budget, they've never heard of America paying its bills during world wars. We paid our bills through the Civil War. We paid our bills through the Marshall Plan, when America was extended as never before.

The American people want a functional government. They want a responsible path forward, and this is not the path that they're suggesting.

A balanced budget constitutional amendment would straitjacket the Federal Government of the United States. I wonder how our Tea Party friends feel about a Republican Party disturbing the Constitution to pay for George Bush's tax cuts. And recall the weapons of mass destruction, 31,000 wounded in Iraq? That bill is due and we need to pay it. Whether you were for Iraq or against it, they served us honorably, and that's what this debate is about.

The war in Afghanistan, we have to pay that bill whether we were for it or against it; \$2.3 trillion worth of tax cuts, while simultaneously invading two countries, a prescription D Medicare benefit that was never paid for.

Friends everywhere, and I hope every speaker that comes to the microphone, including the gentleman from Utah, answers the following question: Was the money borrowed along the way in a series of supplemental budgets to mask the size of the expenditures they were requesting?

The people that set the fire are now the ones calling the fire department. We're in debt because of the positions that they offered when Bill Clinton left. When Clinton walked out the door there was a \$5.7 trillion surplus, five balanced budgets since World War II, and Bill Clinton gave us four of them.

We're here today because of the policies they embraced.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. GUINTA).

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I find myself in an unfortunate position today representing New Hampshire, listening to the conversation and the debate that we've had here in this House. This is a hallowed Chamber, a place that I am honored to serve, honored to bring a responsibility to my constituents from New Hampshire, to, in a dignified way, communicate those feelings that are reflected by people in New Hampshire. And I have sat here for the better part of 2 hours, being ridiculed because my party has the willingness and ability to bring an idea to the floor of this House.

Now, I don't expect everybody, every Member of this institution, to agree with the idea, but I would humbly ask that Members of this institution recognize that there is an idea on the table. The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act is an act not only that I support, but I co-sponsored because I feel that America is in crisis; that my constituents from New Hampshire feel New Hampshire

and America is in crisis because of the spending levels we find ourselves in. And it wasn't one party or the other. We got here holding hands over a long period of time.

But now we have a responsibility as Americans, not as members of a party, but as Americans, to do something about this crisis. I will not go home and look my children in the eye and say that their father couldn't work with Members of the other side of the aisle to solve America's problems.

So today we are here to vote on Cut, Cap, and Balance, a measure that cuts spending immediately, that caps spending back to the 20 percent norms and brings a balanced budget amendment approach so the future, the solvency of this Nation, can be restored.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I agree with much of what the gentleman said, especially that we need to take responsibility for our own actions. And that's why nobody should be taking the position that we won't pay the bills of the United States of America unless we get a plan that's 100 percent our way.

American families can't say to the mortgage company, you know what? I don't like the way you're handling this. I'm not going to pay you, or whatever. And so we need to take that same approach.

Decisions have been made in the past. We're obligated to pay the bill for those decisions. Let's not try and duck those responsibilities for our own actions.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the distinguished ranking member of the Ways and Means Committee.

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. In this bill the Republicans are trying to repeal the second half of the 20th century. We've spent decades trying to knit a truly American fabric around a strengthened middle class. It's a fabric that holds, at its core, retirement security, health care through Medicare and Medicaid, and educational benefits for all through programs such as Pell Grants.

For Republicans, the purpose of this measure is to appeal to their base. But in so doing, they are debasing what we have built over the last half century. And it could not come at a worse time for this country. Republicans say they are dedicated to the markets, but they are essentially now saying, financial markets are damned.

As one analyst put it yesterday, "The closer we get to this August deadline, the more anxious investors become." One anonymous Republican told Politico yesterday, and I quote, "I'm embarrassed to be a Republican. These guys don't understand capital markets. This isn't about who wins an election. This is about whether people are going to be able to finance a home."

It was 46 years ago this month that President Johnson signed Medicare

into law. Yet, this measure doubles down on the Ryan budget proposal that, itself, would end Medicare. Retirees would see, at the very least, a 10 percent cut in their Social Security plans. Nursing home care, which makes up half of Medicaid expenditures, would be slashed. And that is not alone. The devastating cuts to endless programs, such as grants for higher education that have been vital in creating opportunity and building a strong American middle class.

More than 14 million Americans today remain jobless. But instead of using their new House majority to pursue a jobs agenda, it has come to this. Nearly 7 months after they assumed the majority, instead of promoting growth, encouraging job creation, and reinforcing the economic recovery, Republicans have been bringing about uncertainty.

We must, indeed, confront the deficit, but not as the Republicans now propose, tearing apart what has helped create the fabric of the American middle class.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, the President submitted a budget, a budget that never balances. In fact, it doubles and triples the debt. It went to the United States Senate, and 97-0-97-0—not one Democrat voted in favor of that.

Has the President submitted any sort of adjustment or amendment to that? No, he has not. The reality is this President has no plan. We have a plan. We can solve the underlying problem and take care of paying our bills on August 2.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK), a member of the Budget Committee.

□ 1620

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this vote stands as a defining moment in this crisis. Every rating agency has warned that an increase in the debt limit without a credible plan to balance the budget will do great damage to our Nation's credit. And worse, fiscal experts warn that without such a plan we risk a sovereign debt crisis within the next 2 years.

This measure gives the President everything he has asked for—the \$2.4 trillion debt increase to pay for the bills that he and the Congress have recklessly racked up. But it also calls for a constitutionally enforceable workout plan to place our Nation back on the course to fiscal solvency, the centerpiece of which is a balanced budget amendment that has been proposed in one form or another since the birth of our Constitution and that 49 States have adopted.

Now, the gentleman from Maryland reminds us that only a few of those 49 States have both a balanced budget requirement and a two-thirds vote for tax increases. My home State of California happens to be one of them. California's deficits, as bad as they are,

have been proportionally roughly half the size of those that the Federal Government has run up in the same period.

These budget protections work—maybe not perfectly, but they do work. And I might add that when California also had a real spending limit, as this measure calls for, California enjoyed an era of balanced budgets, prudent reserves, no tax increases, and steady economic growth.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The time of the gentleman from Utah has expired.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH).

Mr. WELCH. I thank the gentleman from Maryland.

We face two immediate challenges. The first is, will we pay our bills? That's the whole issue of raising the debt limit. America pays its bills, it's as simple as that. If we owe veterans who served this country their benefits, they're going to get paid. If we went to a war and didn't pay for it and fund it when we went, we have to pay that bill when it becomes due. That is the question. And by the way, Republican iconic figure, Ronald Reagan, who was familiar with tax and budget fights, was the one who said he would never make the debt ceiling, America's full faith and credit, a hostage to a point of view, and did the right thing to pay those bills.

The second issue that we face—and I acknowledge my Republican colleagues for their focus on this—is a long-term fiscal plan. The bill that we have brought before the floor, a balanced budget amendment, raises the question: Is it an effective tool, or is the better approach a balanced approach to revenues and to spending?

The State of Vermont does not have a balanced budget amendment, yet in Vermont we pay our bills and we balance our budget. We do it, number one, by working together. And one of the points that the rating agencies have made is the apprehension here is not so much our ability to pay our bills, it's our ability to work together. Working together requires that we have a balance of cuts, look at that budget, where can we save money? But it also requires that we have a balance of revenues because part of the goal here—again, of a confident country—is to grow our economy. That requires investment in infrastructure, in education, in new industries. And if we are going to be successful, this cannot be just cuts. It has to be balanced with investments that will grow this economy, grow jobs, bring that unemployment rate down. We can do it together.

I see the gentleman from South Carolina included in his approach cutting the Pentagon. That has to be on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEST).

Mr. WEST. I do need to correct my colleague from Vermont: I'm not from South Carolina; I'm from Florida, but that's okay. I'm the guy with hair.

I would like to start off by saying this very simply, I rise in support of H.R. 2560 because when I look back a few years, 2007 to 2011, \$8.67 trillion, \$10.4 trillion, and now we're at about \$14.5 trillion in debt. From 2009 to 2011, \$1.42 trillion, \$1.29 trillion, and an estimated \$1.65 trillion in deficits.

The President's budget for fiscal year 2012, 0-97; 800-plus days the Senate Democrats have not passed a budget; \$1 trillion of wasteful spending of the stimulus. We still have unemployment at 9.2 percent nationally, 16.2 percent in the black community; and 13 percent of my brothers and sisters who are coming back from combat zones are unemployed. Our debt to GDP ratio is about 70 percent. Our government spending to GDP ratio is 24.4 percent; 47 percent of our debt is owned by foreign nations, 27 percent with China.

We are going in the wrong direction. I stand in support of H.R. 2560 because this is insanity, and we cannot continue to do the same thing expecting different results.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I would again remind my colleagues that the last time we were running a budget surplus was during the years of the Clinton administration. During that period of time our spending was at a level that was higher than the limitation in here, and we were paying our obligations. What this would do would create an anti-majoritarian, anti-democratic provision in the Constitution that says you can't balance your budget at 19 percent of GDP, even if that's the will of the American people, even if it's how we did it back during the Clinton administration.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ), a member of the Budget Committee.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2560, which attempts to manipulate the Constitution in order to impose a Ryan budget plan on steroids.

This is yet another thinly veiled attempt by our colleagues across the aisle to end Medicare as we know it while refusing to even consider ending ill-advised tax breaks for millionaires.

It is crucial that the American people understand that this plan would require even deeper cuts than under the Ryan Republican plan we saw in April. This means deeper cuts to investments in education, clean energy, and increased costs for our seniors.

President Obama has vowed to veto this bill, which ends the Medicare guarantee. And, incredulously, the gentleman from Florida, who represents thousands of Medicare beneficiaries, as do I, is supportive of this plan that would increase costs for Medicare bene-

ficiaries, unbelievable from a Member from south Florida. It slashes Medicaid and critical investments essential to winning the future in favor of protecting tax breaks for Big Oil, millionaires and companies who ship American jobs overseas.

Achieving a solution to America's fiscal challenges is absolutely an economic necessity, but the only way to achieve a real solution is through shared sacrifice. We can't ask our seniors, working Americans, and students to bear the burden of our deficits when we're asking nothing of corporations, special interests, and the wealthiest few. Incredibly, our friends across the aisle won't even put that on the table.

The nonpartisan CBO, Congressional Budget Office, has said that the number one policy decision that brought us to the need to prevent the Nation from defaulting on our debt for the first time in history were the Bush tax cuts in 2001 and 2003 that disproportionately benefited the wealthiest Americans. Yet here we are again rewarding the most privileged at the expense of our working families and our seniors, the bedrock of our society.

Cut, cap, and balance may make for a great sound bite, but it would have a devastating impact on our economy and American seniors. It is clearly more like "duck, dodge, and dismantle." For the sake of our economy, it is essential that we move beyond politics as usual and take action to reduce our Nation's deficit and get our fiscal house in order.

On behalf of the 102,000 Medicare beneficiaries in my home district and on behalf of all middle class Americans, I urge my colleagues to join me in opposition to this reckless bill and pass a balanced plan that engages us all in shared sacrifice to solve our Nation's debt crisis.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1½ minutes.

I rise today in support of a plan, an actual plan, to address our fiscal crisis, to cut, cap and balance.

Now, Mr. Speaker, with our debt now topping \$14 trillion, we have no other choice but to start sending clear, immediate signals to the marketplace and the world that we are serious about spending and debt reform. And to show that we are serious, we need to put skin in the game in the form of immediate spending cuts today, caps on spending that occurs tomorrow, and a balanced budget amendment to protect us from spending too much in the future.

You know, I find it interesting that the proponents of a debt limit increase without any substantial reforms point to the so-called financial meltdown-type scenarios of failing to raise the debt limit by August 2. We hear that interest rates for U.S. Treasuries would skyrocket, causing the cost of servicing current debt to increase, which in turn would require more borrowing and disastrous consequences for the Federal budget and also the global economy.

□ 1630

But you know what the other side fails to mention in any of these scenarios is what would happen if we don't get spending under control. The challenge is clear. What are the solutions, though, to it?

House Republicans today are demonstrating that we are committed to confronting our country's addiction to spending and debt with bold and decisive action and with a plan in place. The cut, cap, and balance plan is not only the right prescription to address our fiscal crisis, it is the only plan on the table that makes structural changes to right our fiscal ship. In fact, it is the only plan in place.

Nobody wants to raise the debt ceiling, but if it's going to be raised, we should use it as an opportunity to finally implement comprehensive reform measures to ensure that we never find ourselves in this situation again; because if we do nothing, we put off the tough decision for another day, the only one to blame is ourselves. This is our moment. This is our time to act.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROKITA).

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, it has been very interesting listening to this debate so far. I want to add a couple of points to it.

First of all, I would note for the record that this government is spending \$7 million a minute. We are borrowing \$3 million a minute of that \$7 million. This is money that most Americans will never see in a lifetime, and we are spending that much in a minute.

Now, as I listened to the debate so far, I couldn't help but wonder, Mr. Speaker, what is this President, what are the Democrats so very scared of? Why are they scared of letting a balanced budget amendment go to the people of this country? Let's be clear, voting for this bill starts a balanced budget amendment process, not the implementation of the amendment. So why are they so scared of the people of this country?

Well, if you believe that government, if you believe that elites can make better decisions for the people of this country than the people can, if you believe that they should be controlling the people's money, their property, better than the people can, well, no wonder they are scared. Because overwhelmingly, the people of this country would say to us exactly what they say around the kitchen table, and that is we have to live within our means.

My second point, Mr. Speaker, this is the first time that I can tell in the history of this Republic that this kind of debt has been racked up with no intention and no plan to pay it back. This is the first time. And, quite frankly, I don't know of anything more piggish or un-American than racking up a bill to be passed on to our best asset, our future—our kids—just so we can have more on our plate now, just so that we can have more largess, just so we can

be more selfish in the here and now and kick that can down the road and let our kids pay for it.

Since when has that become part of American exceptionalism? Since when has that attitude become part of this country?

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I know that the gentleman is new to the body, but there were lots of decisions made over the past years for which the bills are coming due now. For example, in 2005 when our Republican colleagues headed up the House, we passed a prescription drug add-on to Medicare which was not funded, not one penny. It was all put on the credit card. Two wars were put on the credit card; and again, tax cuts in 2001, 2003 that disproportionately benefited the very wealthy that created this gap.

So I agree with the gentleman. It is time, sir, to take responsibility for our actions. And it is interesting to hear some folks say that it is a sacrifice for us to have to pay bills for decisions that were made in the past.

Now, yes, we need to get the deficit under control. And again, the President of the United States has put on the table a balanced approach over 10 years, \$3 of spending cuts to \$1 of revenue. And again, our Republican colleagues have walked away from the table because they don't want to raise one penny of revenue from closing corporate tax loopholes.

Just to be clear, the President's plan would extend middle class tax cuts beyond 2013. The President's plan would say let's extend the payroll tax cut for 2012. But he says let's get serious about our deficit and let's do it in a balanced way with shared responsibility.

With that, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), a member of the Ways and Means Committee who knows a lot about the importance of shared responsibility.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the American people are sick and tired of Washington petty games. People's lives, their homes, their retirement, their health care are hanging in the balance. The American people are good, strong, resilient people. They are willing to sacrifice to get our country back on track. But they will not be played as fools. Middle class Americans know they are not getting a fair shake.

This bill protects tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans, while the middle class pay more than their fair share and watch their retirement savings disappear. The American people know that there is a deliberate, systematic attempt to destroy Medicare, to damage Medicaid, and threaten Social Security. This is ducking, dodging, and destroying. If it looks like a duck, walks like a duck, quacks like a duck, it must be a duck.

The American people want one thing. They want jobs, good jobs, jobs that pay the bills, give people back their dignity, and get people back on track with the American Dream. Our Nation deserves nothing less.

But this bill would destroy those hopes and those dreams. It will plunge our economy back into a deep recession. It will mean more lost jobs, more lost homes, and seniors living in poverty without health care and basic necessities. It will mean children going hungry, and it will keep smart young people from going off to college.

This bill will sell the very soul of our Nation. We, as Americans, are better than this. We are more compassionate than this. We know better.

It is easier to destroy than it is to build. Another generation of leaders did more with less; they built people up. We cannot turn back.

Vote "no" on this bill. Let's go back to the table and work on a compromise that prevents default, preserves our moral obligation to our seniors, and puts America back on the road to greatness.

Mr. GARRETT. I yield 1 minute to the gentledady from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER), who is concerned not only about the soul of the Nation today but the soul of the Nation for our posterity as well, who is not willing to duck the hard fiscal issues.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, after years, literally years, of growing government and increasing spending beyond all reason, it is now long past time to bring fiscal sanity to Washington and to put America on a path to prosperity.

Mr. Speaker, our national debt has increased. Today it exceeds \$14 trillion. Our debt has increased by almost \$4 trillion, which is more than \$120 billion a month in new debt just since President Obama has been in office. That is \$120 billion each and every month with this new President.

Government has grown so large that it now spends nearly 25 percent of our annual economic output, a level not seen since World War II. That has crowded out private sector growth and new jobs and opportunities that Americans need and are demanding.

This plan puts forward real cuts to spending; no smoke, no mirrors. It enforces discipline with real caps on spending and a balanced budget amendment. And it gives the President the increase in the debt ceiling he is seeking if the balanced budget amendment is sent to the States.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this commonsense reform.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE).

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, many Members of recent sessions of Congress have not been known as practitioners of fiscal discipline.

time for the Congress to embrace a balanced budget amendment which will then set us upon a course where fiscal discipline is not merely an option but a necessity. Only then, Mr. Speaker, will the Congress balance its own budget.

I urge support of this worthwhile and commonsense piece of legislation and would like to see it enacted, although that probably will not be the conclusion.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARRETT. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON).

Mr. OLSON. I thank my colleague from New Jersey for the time.

Mr. Speaker, there are two reasons why this is the most important vote of my 2½ years in Congress: Their names are Kate and Grant Olson. They are my children. Kate is 14 and Grant is 11. My wife, Nancy, and I uprooted them from the only home that they knew and moved back to my home State of Texas to run for Congress because we were worried that the ever-increasing Federal debt was the greatest threat to their future.

Today, for the first time in my children's young lives, the House of Representatives is passing game-changing legislation that puts our Nation on a path to fiscal sanity and ensures that my Kate, my Grant, your Kates and your Grants, have better lives than we did.

I urge my colleagues to make a downpayment on the future of America's youth and vote in support of H.R. 2560.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I would just ask my Republican colleagues to consider why they want to write a provision in the Constitution of the United States that would make it harder to shut down a special interest tax loophole for the purpose of reducing the deficit for our children and grandchildren.

I now yield 4 minutes to our very distinguished Democratic whip and my colleague from the State of Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. I thank my friend, the ranking member of the Budget Committee, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, for yielding.

The American public are rightfully very distressed with the Congress of the United States. They're distressed that at a time of great challenge and great risk, that we fiddle while the debt threatens to burn us, to place our country in the position of being adjudged uncreditworthy. That is not worthy of this Congress or any one of us that serves in this Congress.

We have 14 days, according to the Secretary Treasurer, until such time as America will be unable to pay its obligations, whether to foreigners or to people in this country. That is not a situation that will be looked at positively by the financial sector or by any one of our constituents whose ability to save, to have a 401(k) that is stable, to purchase an automobile or a refrigerator or send their kid to college will be put at risk because of increased interest rates. Not one of us will be held

harmless if this Congress fails to do its duty.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have had a number of efforts to get us to where we needed to be to get back to fiscal responsibility. I'm amused when I hear our new Members talk about the fiscal irresponsibility, because I've served here long enough to know that the two Presidents under whom the debt was raised most were Ronald Reagan, a 186 percent increase from the \$985 billion total debt when Ronald Reagan took office to over \$2.8 trillion, and George Bush II, who increased the national debt 86 percent. Did he do it alone? Of course not. Did we all do it, Republicans and Democrats? Yes.

Democrats believe that the debt was raised because we bought things on the Republican watch that were not paid for. That's indisputable. You cannot argue that. Those are the facts. The fact is, did we do the same in the Obama administration? We did. Why? Because we had to respond to the deepest recession we have seen. We didn't create enough jobs. In fact, we lost jobs.

So we bring a bill to the floor some weeks ago to address the creditworthiness of the United States of America, and the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee said, We offer this bill to fail. Not to solve the problem. To fail.

Now we bring a bill to the floor of the House of Representatives this day, 14 days before the debt limit is reached and America might default for the first time in history. This bill was written sometime late Friday or perhaps Saturday. How many of you said, Have you read the bill? How many hours have you taken to consider this bill?

I've read the bill, too, Paul. I guarantee you there is not an American who's not on the Budget Committee that reads this bill knows what impact it has, and the chairman of the Budget Committee is shaking his head and agreeing with me. The fact of the matter is you haven't had one second of hearing on this, there was no markup on this bill, and it has significant consequences.

Let me tell you, my friends on the other side of the aisle, I'm one of those who stands in this well who voted for the balanced budget amendment in 1995.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield the gentleman an additional minute.

Mr. HOYER. I voted because I believed we needed to get to fiscal responsibility, and in fact we did, and we balanced the budget 4 years in a row, and George Bush inherited a \$5.6 trillion projected surplus. Not debt. Not deficit. And 22 million jobs having been created before he took office. Eight years later, we had increased the debt by \$5 trillion.

I'm not going to vote for the balanced budget amendment, and I urge my colleagues to reject this bill, which

has no chance of passage, and we need to stop fiddling. We need to do our work and make sure America can pay its debts, because if it can't, every one of our constituents will lose and our country will lose.

Our oath of office was to preserve and protect. Defeat this ill-advised, ill-timed, unconsidered piece of legislation and let us move to fiscal responsibility in a way that will bring us all together in a bipartisan way, as Bowles-Simpson tried to do, as BIDEN tried to do, and as, frankly, Mr. BOEHNER and the President tried to do. Let's get to that objective. The country deserves it.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

Mr. GARRETT. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GRAVES), who recognizes that if the balanced budget amendment was appropriate back in 1995, with debt now reaching over \$14 trillion today, how much more so is it relevant to pass today.

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Here we are. We are at the moment of choosing, and we just heard from the former leader of the former majority party that we need to oppose this.

But to those in the gallery here today, to those watching on camera, just in a few hours you will get the opportunity to see behind me on this board every name of every Member of Congress and how they vote. They will make a choice. They will take their voting card, of which you've entrusted us with, and they will make a decision: this Nation should balance its budget or not.

This isn't so much about cut, cap, balance. This is about prosperity or continued high unemployment. That would be green for prosperity, red for high unemployment. This is about accountability and constraints, green, or Washington run wild. Again, that would be the red button and the status quo.

□ 1650

This is about sustainability of our future or continued uncertainty as we've seen thus far. Or, better yet, this is about standing on our own. The green button, independence of this great Nation. Or, continued and increasing bondage of foreign nations and our indebtedness. Again, the red button.

Members of Congress, this is your time of choosing. We've heard so many names invoked here today. Former Presidents, Members of Congress, other Congresses. But, guess what? This is your time. This is your choice. This is your voting card. What will you choose: A prosperous future for this Nation or continue the status quo?

I urge Members, let's choose a great, prosperous future for this Nation. America deserves it.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are again reminded to address their remarks to the Chair. It is inappropriate to address occupants of the gallery and also to address others in the second person.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. This is a time for choosing. We have to reduce our deficit. We have to get the budget in the balance. The question is, how we do this? And we believe that it is a corruption of the Constitution to write into the Constitution itself a provision that says a majority vote can cut Medicare and Social Security but you need a two-thirds undemocratic vote to close a corporate tax loophole for the purpose of reducing the deficit.

I yield 1 minute to gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. First, let me thank the gentleman for yielding and for his outstanding leadership.

I rise in strong opposition to what has been appropriately labeled as the "duck, dodge, and dismantle" budget bill. The Republicans duck making the hard choices by requiring us to actually amend our Constitution before we can act to avoid default. The end result: America fails to pay its bills on time.

The Republicans dodge facing the real challenge by continuing tax breaks for the super wealthy and Big Oil, funding two wars, and other Republican interests. And the Republicans want to dismantle our Nation's economic security for seniors, the disabled, and the poor by cutting Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security. Making heartless cuts on the backs of the most vulnerable will not balance the budget. And it's morally wrong.

Now, with only 14 days left, Republicans are pushing forward legislation that will guarantee a default and will kill hundreds of thousands of jobs. This "duck, dodge, and dismantle" bill would end the social safety net, kill jobs, and set our Nation back rather than move it forward. I urge my colleagues to oppose this job-killing bill that would end up being written in stone in our Constitution. It turns the American Dream into a nightmare.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, just to remind the other side of the aisle with regard to the radical plan that we talked about here with regard to changing or amending the Constitution, it was Thomas Jefferson who said, in a letter to John Taylor, I wish that it were possible to obtain just a single amendment to our Constitution. I would be willing to depend on that alone, that our government would return to the genuine principles of the Constitution. And he was speaking, of course, of what we're doing here today, what Thomas Jefferson wished that we had done over 200 years ago: a balanced budget amendment.

With that, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS).

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. I rise in strong support of H.R. 2560 to address our national debt.

In 2006 then-Senator Barack Obama voted against raising the debt ceiling. He said at that time that the rising national debt was a "sign of leadership failure." Today, President Barack Obama is asking Congress to raise the national debt \$2.4 trillion, largely to fund many of the programs that he's had passed in the last couple of years. And to put that into perspective, that amounts to \$20,000 for every American family. Congress is being asked to add \$20,000 in debt burden to every American family. And we owe it to them before we raise that debt to make sure we are cutting up the credit cards and that we are not going to continue to spend beyond our means.

House Republicans are committed to getting our fiscal house in order. House Republicans are committed to protecting our excellent credit rating. It is the national debt that threatens our credit rating. The bill before us today, Cut, Cap, and Balance, is a credible plan to address this situation. It will cut spending immediately, it will enact spending caps, and it will require the passage of a balanced budget amendment. Forty-nine out of 50 States balance their budgets.

The President's spend, borrow, and bail out policies have clearly failed. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation. Let's help America's economy today and let's keep the American Dream alive for many years to come.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I would hazard a guess that Thomas Jefferson would not want to write into the Constitution of the United States anti-democratic provisions that said you need two-thirds in order to close special interest tax loopholes for the purpose of deficit reduction or to say that we're going to decide now, for all time, that we have to balance our budget at 18 percent of GDP rather than some other number that may be the will of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARRETT. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE).

Mr. KLINE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act. The severity of our Nation's fiscal crisis cannot be overstated. More than 14 million Americans are looking for work. Meanwhile, Federal spending continues at an unprecedented pace, with an average of \$4 billion added to our country's debt every day. We need to encourage economic growth and investment. Instead, leaders on the other side of the aisle are pushing more reckless policies, more redtape, and more taxes to pay for their irresponsible spending spree, leaving job creators frozen by uncertainty and fear, and risking our future prosperity.

At a recent roundtable in Minnesota, a small business owner told me, The government is out of control. It's too big, and I don't like it. Well, I don't like it either, and it's costing our country jobs. It's time for Washington to do what's right. We need to make the tough choices necessary to get our Nation's fiscal house in order. No one said it would be easy, but it certainly is necessary.

The legislation before us today will end unsustainable spending and put this Nation back on a fiscally responsible path. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARRETT. Just to the gentleman from the other side of the aisle who made the point regarding what sort of amendment that Thomas Jefferson may have been looking for today, whether he actually would be looking for one, what we call a supermajority, what have you, in point of fact I believe Jefferson would be going even further than what we are doing here today and simply say that Congress should not have the ability to borrow at all. The amendment that we are putting forward would actually give us greater flexibility with that in time of emergency, in time of war, and Congress can take it upon themselves to borrow. Jefferson understood that first and foremost that Congress, just like the businesses and families at the time, needed to live within their means. And he saw it as immoral, basically, to take the responsibilities of this generation and place them on future generations.

At this time I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WOMACK).

Mr. WOMACK. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I've had the privilege of serving Arkansas' Third District now for a little more than 6 months in this Congress. And I can still hear the voices of those people who sent me here. Their voices said, Steve, you've got to go to Washington and you've got to cut spending. You've got to empower the private sector. You've got to reduce the size of government. You've got to get to Washington and help put us back to work. Those same conversations at home at the kitchen table, people discussing their personal budgets, saying to me that, I have to live within my means, why doesn't Washington?

Mr. Speaker, to each of these comments I say, we have an answer. It's a trifecta, if you will. It's called Cut, Cap, and Balance.

Mr. Speaker, I realize I've only been here a short time, but I know full well how Washington works. And I know that this concept is foreign to the many people who have been here down through the years. But if you look around and take an objective view, you will know that the only way to bring legitimate control to the irresponsible

fiscal behavior of Washington, D.C., the only way to restore the integrity of this Chamber, to restore the confidence in the people we serve, is to make it constitutional, a balanced budget amendment.

□ 1700

No gimmicks, Mr. Speaker. No hollow promises. Simple language that rank-and-file Americans can wrap their heads around: a constitutional requirement for this country to balance its books.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARRETT. I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for yielding.

During his 8 years as President, President Bush increased the national debt \$3 trillion. We spent too much money. But not to be outdone, in a 3-year period of time, President Obama has increased the national debt \$5 trillion—a 56 percent increase. Then he turns around and lectures middle class American families, struggling families, to eat their peas. He offers no plan, no answers—nothing but a phoney budget that even failed in the Democrat-controlled Senate 97-0. HARRY REID voted against his budget.

The President owns this economy, not Haliburton, not Cheney, not George Bush. It's the President. He owns the skyrocketing debt. He owns the 15 million unemployed. He owns the failed stimulus plan. President Obama owns the extended Bush tax cuts because it was he who extended them 2 years. Now, in our time of great fiscal crisis, when America needs leadership, he is absent.

The Republicans in the House are offering a plan, and I understand the Democrats don't like it. That's good, because sometimes the two parties have to battle it out, and you get a better product from it, but you can't do it when the Democrats aren't offering a plan. We will pass this plan today, and I hope HARRY REID and the Democrats will pass a plan and that we can get together. I hope the President decides to offer a plan. Maybe we can look at his, and maybe out of the three possibilities, we can do what's best for the American people, but we can't do it unless the President decides to engage and take on the role of leader.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, once again, the President had a plan to reduce the deficit by about \$4 trillion over 10 years—\$3 in cuts, \$1 in revenue. Our Republican colleagues walked away from the table because they didn't want \$1 of deficit reduction from closing special interest tax loopholes.

With that, I yield 3¼ minutes to the distinguished member of the Judiciary Committee, the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. Many of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle would not be

here today if President Jefferson had not borrowed to finance the Louisiana Purchase.

Mr. Speaker, this bill promises all the fun of a constitutional amendment without actually amending the Constitution. It simply says that the United States should default on our debts and destroy our economy if we don't amend the Constitution.

If we default on our debts, we will do more damage to our economy than large deficits, tax increases and draconian cuts combined. Right now, we enjoy very low interest rates because we are still the most stable, reliable and wealthy country in the world.

If the markets get the idea that we are too dysfunctional to pay our debts, even though we are certainly wealthy enough to do so, nothing else will matter. Interest rates will climb. Homeowners and businesses will be pushed out of the credit market. The stock market will crash.

Never before in the history of this country has anyone been irresponsible enough to play chicken with our full faith and credit. Never.

We know how to balance the budget, because we've done it before. In the not-too-distant past, we managed, in working with President Clinton, not only to balance the budget but to run surpluses and begin paying down the debt. Unfortunately, President Bush and a Republican Congress managed to turn record surpluses into record deficits in record time.

Rather than admit to serious Republican economic mismanagement and finding responsible solutions, we get this dusted-off quack cure from the past. The so-called balanced budget amendment requires a balanced budget much sooner than does the Republican budget that the House recently passed, the one that abolishes Medicare and turns Medicaid into a block grant.

I asked the sponsor of the balanced budget amendment, the gentleman from Virginia, how he thought this could be done. He answered that the Republican Study Committee budget, which is even more radical than the Ryan budget, would be in balance in just 9 years. That's what we're really voting for today—an accelerated version of the Republican Study Committee budget. Anyone voting for this should be prepared to go home and explain that vote, including Republican members who voted against their study committee budget.

Economists have long known that, in good times, you should balance the budget and pay down the debt but that, in times of recession, when tax revenues plummet and the economy contracts, you have to spend money on unemployment insurance and on putting people back to work. You must run a deficit to get the economy going again. The balanced budget amendment would force us to do the exact opposite and turn every recession into a depression.

This constitutional amendment does a whole lot more than require a bal-

anced budget. Many of its provisions simply cement into the Constitution the policy preferences of the current majority and bind our children and grandchildren to those preferences.

The two-thirds requirement, for example, to increase revenues would have the perverse effect of allowing special interest tax loopholes to be slipped into law with a majority vote, but would require a supermajority to repeal them. This is not just antithetical to a balanced budget; it would also cement the most corrupt aspects of our Tax Code into the Constitution.

The amendment would also require a two-thirds vote for any budget that exceeds 18 percent of GDP. The CBO tells us: "Outlays have averaged close to 21 percent of GDP over the past 40 years." Federal outlays have not dropped below 18 percent since 1966—that is, since the enactment of Medicare.

Regardless of what other parts of this bill may say, there is no way to meet these restrictions without destroying Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, veterans' programs, and military preparedness. That's just arithmetic, and no amount of rhetoric will change it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield the gentleman an additional 10 seconds.

Mr. NADLER. The real problem is that tax revenues have declined from 20½ percent of GDP in 2000 to 14½ percent of GDP because we no longer tax the millionaires, the billionaires and the large corporations the way we used to.

Let's start doing that, and we can have a balanced budget without phoney constitutional amendments which promise balanced budgets, without showing how, but that do protect the millionaires from paying their fair share.

Mr. GARRETT. We are also reminded that Jefferson said in 1816 that he sincerely believed that the principle of spending money today that we don't have, to be paid for by posterity, is but swindling future generations—something this Republican Party does not wish to do.

With that, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act.

Last November, the American people sent a clear and resounding message to cut up the Nation's credit card and to stop spending money we don't have. Today, we are doing that.

This act makes immediate spending cuts and forces the Federal Government to do what Americans all over this country are doing: living within their means. This legislation also begins to cap Federal Government spending at levels that are historically sustainable to ensure vibrant economic growth. Finally, this measure forces the Federal Government to do what to most Americans is simply plain common sense: to spend only the amount of money that you have.

A balanced budget amendment is long overdue.

Republicans have heard the American people's call to action to reduce spending, and that is why I strongly support this measure. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARRETT. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE).

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. I rise today in support of the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act because American families deserve to have a government that lives within its means, just like they do.

Our national debt has grown in excess of \$14 trillion—that's more than \$46,000 for every man, woman and child in this country—and we continue to borrow, roughly, 40 cents of every dollar we spend. This is a path to financial ruin that will leave the next generation with a less prosperous America than the one we inherited.

Now, I find it astonishing on the House floor that balancing our budget would have a devastating effect on our economy. It's hard to believe, but it has been said.

The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act keeps the promise we made to the American people to cut spending while also granting the President's request for a debt limit increase. By cutting spending \$111 billion the first year alone, by capping future spending and by laying the groundwork for a balanced budget amendment, this package will save \$5.8 trillion over the next 10 years. This bill is nothing more than good old-fashioned common sense, and I urge my colleagues to support this.

□ 1710

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) will control the time on the minority side.

There was no objection.

Mr. MORAN. I reserve the balance of my time, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. GARRETT. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE).

Mr. SCALISE. I rise in support of Cut, Cap and Balance.

If you look at what American families have been telling us for the last few years, during these tough economic times what they have been doing is they have been cutting back. They have been tightening their belts, and they sit around the kitchen table and figure out how to balance their budget and live within their means.

Yet today on the other side, all you've seen is a parade of Members coming and criticizing the concept of a balanced budget, actually calling it extreme, radical. Imagine that. Only a big-spending Washington liberal could think it would be radical to require Washington to start living within its means like families have been doing for years.

So, frankly, American families would say it's about time. Welcome to the party. And, instead, some people think you can just live in this fantasy land where you can just keep taxing, spending, borrowing money from China and act like the day of reckoning is never going to come and kick the can down to our children and our grandchildren and make it their problem.

Well, it's time to say enough is enough. We're not going to pass this on to the next generation. We're going to deal with our problems today. We're going to set priorities today and do the tough things people sent us to do. And that means cutting, capping, and balancing the Federal budget.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, again, the choice is not whether we put in place a plan to reduce the deficit and balance the budget. The issue is how we do that. That is the difference here.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARRETT. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GIBBS).

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of Cut, Cap, and Balance. Out-of-control spending by the Federal Government has driven our country to the brink of financial meltdown.

Our Nation's debt crisis was easily predictable. In recent years, America has watched as the size of the Federal Government has ballooned and deficit spending has reached dangerous levels. Yet despite the warning, Congress stuck with business as usual—more spending, more regulations, and bigger government. It's time to put an end to business as usual for the good of the country. Our country needs it, the American people demand it, and the future of our grandchildren depends on it.

This legislation puts us on the path of fiscal responsibility, brings certainty, and restores private sector confidence. The naysayers say we can't do this. They argue for tax increases on our job creators. This measure will unleash the private sector and result in more revenues to ensure strength in Social Security, Medicare, and other needed programs.

Just raising the debt ceiling without spending cut reforms according to Moody's and Standards & Poor's will probably lead to a downgrade of U.S. paper and a downhill spiral, higher interest rates, higher taxes, and less opportunities. I urge the support of this and to cut spending now instead of 6 to 10 years from now.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARRETT. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS), who, while the White House says that leadership is not simply proposing a bill to vote up or down, recognizes that the White House has not given us any plan of leadership so far on this issue.

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. It's been said before that the United States Government owes close to \$14.3 trillion. An estimate by the CBO reveals that by the year 2021, the government will spend 100 percent of every dollar in revenue on entitlements. Simply raising the debt limit to \$16.3 trillion without comparable spending reduction is irresponsible at best and catastrophic for our Nation at worst.

Forcing our Nation's spiraling and out-of-control debt onto the backs of our country's children and grandchildren is irresponsible. Comparable spending reductions would be in the amount of at least \$2 trillion. But as that does not even cover the interest on the debt, a \$4 trillion spending reduction would be appropriate; and that's what we should be working on.

Today we must ask ourselves, Is this blessed country of ours disciplined enough to solve the debt problem through austerity and productivity? I think we can. I believe we can. But only if we break from the tradition of spending and raising our debt limit. Instead, we must pass H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARRETT. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. BERG).

Mr. BERG. Mr. Speaker, we've been down this road before. Our country faces unprecedented debt. The House has worked to cut spending and reduce the deficit. But the Senate Democrat leadership and the Obama administration would rather raise taxes and mislead Americans with scare tactics rather than support these commonsense solutions, solutions that would help get our country back on track.

We cannot do the same thing over and over again and expect a different result. Americans have tightened their belts, and they've made the tough choices. It's time for Washington to do the same.

Our financial situation is a mess. It's going to be a long road to get our country back on track, but it's clear we can begin right here. We need to cut the spending, we need to cap the growth in government, and we need to balance the budget.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I would remind my colleagues that this provision that they're talking about, the constitutional proposal that came out of the Judiciary Committee, would prohibit the Congress from balancing the budget at 13 percent of GDP expenditures. It would say you cannot make that choice. It would also say you have to reach a two-thirds hurdle to reduce the special interest tax breaks for the purpose of deficit reduction.

So we keep hearing about this balanced budget amendment without any mention from our colleagues that they've inserted these two devices into the Constitution that would limit our

ability to balance the budget in a balanced way.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARRETT. Would that we had the problem of this Congress over the last 2 years trying to balance the budget, what with \$1 trillion in additional stimulus spending, \$2 trillion in the cost of ObamaCare, \$3 trillion overall added to the budget deficit. Would that be the problem that we'd look to the other side of the aisle to try to live within our means. Unfortunately, that's not the case. And that's the reason why, as our Founders understood and as we spoke of Jefferson before, the need to try to constrain ourselves with cutting spending now, placing legislative caps offered tomorrow, and then going forward in the future with a constitutional balanced budget amendment.

With that, I yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from North Carolina (Mrs. MYRICK), who understands the importance of living within our means.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, the possible default of the Federal Government presents a near-term problem which could have disastrous effects in the short-term on our economy.

But the bigger problem is long term because Washington has just been spending too much money for too darn long—borrowing 40 cents just about of every dollar we spend, most of it from China, and sending the bills to our kids and our grandkids.

This bill to cut spending, cap and then balance the budget is something that needs to be done. And we can't keep kicking the can down the road. You've heard that before, but it's true. The responsibility is on us to do the right thing for tomorrow for our families and everybody else.

We balanced the budget almost, some years ago. It's not impossible. It can be done if we have the courage to do it; 49 out of 50 States do it.

So we need to remember there's no such thing as government money. It is the taxpayers' money. It's our job to be responsible stewards of that. We need to step up and take that responsibility and pass this bill.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, that's right. A few years ago during the Clinton administration when they took a balanced approach to deficit reduction, we did run surpluses.

With that, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the distinguished member of the Budget Committee as well for the great work that he has been doing.

As I listened to my friends discuss this question of being responsible, I want to at least announce breaking news that our friends in the other body have come up with a semi-solution on revenue and on the question of how we would cut. They are seeking to be responsible; and today in this body, we are not.

□ 1720

I heard a tutorial about the green light and the red light, which, as a Member, you understand green is “yes” and “no” comes up red. What the red will mean is to stop the insanity, to stop the loss of our moral compass, the responsibility to pay America’s bills. What the green light will mean is that America, in fact, would not be paying the bills of our families. We wouldn’t be paying Social Security; interest rates would spike; the U.S. dollar would decline; and our credit would literally go out the door. Being without responsibility is what we are planning to do. Then we will lose the ability to pay for the Medicare of American Seniors and would no longer keep America’s hospital’s open and doctors paid.

So don’t be fooled by the green light tutorial. We, frankly, are going to lose our way. We’ll close hospitals. We won’t have the ability to provide for our seniors, and these are the very persons that my colleagues over here believe that they are helping. But the main point that I want to emphasize very quickly is that the Constitution of the United States already says that the validity of the public debt of the United States in the 14th Amendment, section 4, shall not be questioned.

Let me tell you today that a balanced budget amendment will destroy the United States, and it will not allow us to pay for those in need. Tap dance, losers’ club, bust the benefits. That’s what this bill is. Tap dance, losers’ club, and bust the benefits. That is what will happen to all of us. Americans like the friends and families of our military personnel will suffer.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 2560, the “Cut, Cap, and Balance Act of 2011,” which attempts to resolve our budget ceiling crisis by authorizing an increase in the debt limit while implementing spending cuts, caps on future spending, and requiring an amendment to the Constitution. While I support bipartisan efforts to increase the debt limit and to resolve our differences over budgetary revenue and spending issues, I cannot support a bill that unduly constrains the ability of Congress to deal effectively with America’s economic, fiscal, and job creation troubles.

As I stated earlier this afternoon, This bill should be called the “Tap Dance, Loser Club, and Bust Bill.” It tap dances around raising our debt ceiling and acting in a responsible manner to pay our nation’s debt obligations. Our nation will be joining the losers club by threatening to eliminate important social programs such as Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, and Pell grants. There has been a theme this Congress of focusing on cutting programs for the most at need and ignoring the need to focus on Job creation. This bill busts the hopes and dreams of our children, seniors, and military families. It busts the hopes to grow our nation in the future. I state again that H.R. 2560 has earned the name the “Tap Dance, Loser Club, and Bust Bill.” I will call it the “Tap Dance, Loser Club, and Bust Bill” from this point forward, because that is what it is . . . when something walks like a

duck, quacks like a duck and looks like a duck . . . call it a duck. This bill is wasting a tremendous amount of time when we should be focused on paying our nation’s bills and resolving our differences.

As we continue to discuss the necessity of increasing our debt ceiling, I have heard the concerns of many of my constituents and the American people regarding the size of our national debt and the care with which taxpayer money is spent. I, too, am concerned about these issues; for to burden future generations of Americans with tremendous amounts of debt should not be a way to avoid our fiscal responsibilities to the American people. However, the task of resolving our debt ceiling crisis must take precedence over other concerns, including political ideology.

Prior to the existence of the debt ceiling, Congress had to approve borrowing each time the Federal Government wished to borrow money in order to carry out its functions. With the onset of World War I, more flexibility was needed to expand the government’s capability to borrow money expeditiously in order to meet the rapidly changing requirements of funding a major war in the modern era.

To address this need, the first debt ceiling was established in 1917, allowing the Federal Government to borrow money to meet its obligations without prior Congressional approval, so long as in the aggregate, the amount borrowed did not eclipse a specified limit.

Since the debt limit was first put in place, Congress has increased it over 100 times; in fact, it was raised 10 times within the past decade. Congress last came together and raised the debt ceiling in February 2010. Today, the debt ceiling currently stands at \$14.3 trillion dollars. In reality, that limit has already been eclipsed, but due to accounting procedures by Treasury Secretary Geithner, the debt limit can be artificially avoided until August 2nd.

Congress must act now in order to avert a crisis. Never in the history of America has the United States defaulted on its debt obligations.

We must be clear on what this issue means for our country. United States Treasury bonds have traditionally been one of the safest investments another country or investor could make. For foreign nations and investors, purchasing a U.S. Treasury bond meant that they held something virtually as safe as cash, backed by the full faith and credit of the United States Government.

In turn, with the proceeds from the bonds, the Federal Government of the world’s largest economy is able to finance its operations. If the United States defaults on its debt obligations, the financial crisis that began in 2008 would pale in comparison, according to economic experts. The ensuing economic catastrophe would not only place the U.S. economy in a tailspin, but the world economy as well.

The fact that Congress, a body that typically has its fair share of political baffles, has never played political chicken when it came to raising the debt ceiling should give us all pause, and is a testament to the seriousness with which we must approach this issue. However, this time around, my Republican colleagues have created an impasse based upon an ideological commitment to spending cuts. While I understand and share the concern of my Republican colleagues with respect to deficit spending, and will continue to work with them in order to find reductions, now is not the time

to put ideology over pragmatism. The reality is that, on August 3rd, the United States will begin to default on its debt obligations if the debt ceiling is not raised.

This detour into a spending debate is as unnecessary as it is perilous, as increasing the debt ceiling does not obligate the undertaking of any new spending by the Federal Government. Rather, raising the debt limit simply allows the government to pay existing legal obligations promised to debt holders that were already agreed to by Presidents and Congresses, both past and present.

Moreover, the impending crisis would have already occurred were it not for the extraordinary measures taken by Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, including the suspension of the investment in securities to finance the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund, as well as the redemption of a portion of those securities already held by that fund.

If the United States defaults on its obligations on August 3rd, the stock market will react violently to the news that for the first time in history, America is unable to keep its promises to pay. Not once in American history has the country’s full faith and credit been called into question.

Once America defaults, investors who purchase U.S. bonds and finance our government will be less likely to lend to America in the future. Just as a person who defaults on a loan will find it harder to convince banks to lend them money in the future, a country that defaults on its debt obligations will find it harder to convince investors to lend money to a government that did not pay. Showing the world that the United States does not pay its debts makes the purchasing of that debt less desirable because it requires the assumption of more risk on the part of the investors.

Furthermore, any investors that do continue to purchase U.S. Treasury bonds will demand much higher interest rates in order to cover the increased risk. Once a default occurs, investors figure that the chance of the United States defaulting again is much greater, and will require the government to pay higher rates of interest in order to make the loan worth the risk for investors to take on.

Imagine the impact on our stock market if we do not pay our debts. As we have seen throughout the recent financial crisis, a bad stock market hurts not only big businesses and large investors on Wall Street, but small businesses and small investors as well. Families with investments tied to the stock market, such as 401(k)s, pension plans, and savings, will once again see the value of their investments drop. The American people are tired of the uncertainty of the value of their retirement accounts. We must not allow another wild fluctuation to occur due to default and add to the uncertainty still lingering in the minds of citizens.

As if another stock market crisis were not enough, the housing market would take another hit if America defaulted. Higher mortgage rates in a housing market already weakened by default and foreclosures would cause a further depression of home values, destroying whatever equity families might have left in their homes after the housing crisis. Moreover, the long-term effects would reduce spending and investment in the housing market.

Increasing the debt ceiling is the responsible thing to do. Congress has already debated and approved the debt that an increased ceiling makes room for. However, my Republican

colleagues have chosen to use this as an opportunity to hold the American people hostage to their extreme agenda. They know that the "Tap Dance, Loser Club, and Bust Bill" is not a realistic proposal.

In fact, part of the bill is another attempt to get the Paul Ryan budget plan enacted, which caps annual spending as a share of GDP. Moreover, it limits discretionary spending for the global war on terror. As a member of the Committee on Homeland Security, I am acutely aware of the threats our Nation faces from terrorism. By tying the hands of Congress in the fight against terrorism, this bill puts our troops and our homeland at risk. The safety of the American people has no price, and Congress should not be constrained when coming together to decide what level of funding is most appropriate for the global war on terror.

If that were not enough, this bill goes beyond simply implementing budgetary restraints, and contains the absurd requirement that a Constitutional amendment be passed by both the House and Senate and submitted to states prior to any increase in the debt ceiling. Leaving the merits of such a Constitutional amendment aside for a moment, do the proponents of this bill honestly expect such an amendment to be submitted to the states by the August 2nd deadline?

Passing an amendment to the Constitution is one of the most serious processes the United States Congress can undertake, requiring a two thirds supermajority of support in both the House and Senate and ratification by three fourths (¾ths) of the States. The Founders purposely made the amendment process a long and arduous one. Do my Republican colleagues really expect Congress to capriciously pass an amendment altering our Nation's founding document on such short notice; an amendment that will fundamentally change our country without reasonable time for debate; without the opportunity for a hearing or questioning of witnesses; without any reports as to what impact it may have?

By tying the fate of whether the United States pays its debt obligations to the historically prolonged Constitutional amendment process, the Republicans who support this bill have demonstrated, at this critical juncture in American history, that they are profoundly irresponsible when it comes to the integrity of our economy and utterly bereft of sensible solutions for fixing it.

Moreover, the Constitutional amendment itself is merely a ploy to make tax cuts for the wealthy and tax loopholes for big corporations a permanent fixture of American governance. It would make any revenue-raising measure unconstitutional unless a two-thirds supermajority approves it. This is simply unprecedented and unacceptable.

H.J. Res. 1, one of the Constitutional amendment bills acceptable under this bill, limits annual federal spending to 20 percent of the prior year's gross domestic product (GDP), a limit even lower than 20 percent of the current year's GDP since GDP typically grows each year. By contrast, federal spending averaged 22 percent of GDP during Ronald Reagan's presidency—before the baby boomers had reached retirement age, swelling the population eligible for Social Security and Medicare, and when health care costs were much lower. As written this bill would render Social Security unconstitutional in its current form. Capping future spending below Reagan-era

levels would force devastating cuts to Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, Head Start, child care, Pell grants, and many other critical programs.

Any cuts made to accommodate a mandated balanced budget would fall most heavily on domestic discretionary programs; the immediate result of a balanced budget amendment would be devastating cuts in education, homeland security, public safety, health care and research, transportation and other vital services.

As written this bill would cut total funding for non-defense discretionary programs by approximately 70 percent in 2021, and by more than \$3 trillion over the next ten years. This includes veterans' medical care, most homeland security activities, border protection, and the FBI. These cuts will impact funds to protect our Nation's food and water supply, environmental protections, medical research, education, and services for disadvantaged or abused children, frail elderly people, and people with severe disabilities.

H.J. Res 1 proposes to convert Medicare to vouchers and raises its eligibility from age 65 to 67. It also raises the Social Security retirement age to 70. It contains cuts to the core programs for the poorest and most disadvantaged Americans in 2021; Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps), and Supplemental Security Income would all be cut in half.

This bill will make victims of natural disasters part of the "Loser Club." As the drought in Texas continues, ranchers are forced to sell cattle in the largest beef-producing state. The drought has also induced wildfires. Just last month, a fire that lasted more than a week burned over 4,200 acres and destroyed between two and three million dollars in timber. Since November 2010, more than 13,000 fires have burned over 3.29 million acres of Texas land. Texas Governor Rick Perry requested that the President declare disaster areas in the State of Texas in order to make those areas eligible for federal relief funds. This bill threatens to take away those very funds.

In the State of Missouri, storms, tornadoes, and floods recently ravaged the lands. A nuclear plant was inches of water away from being shut down because of rising flood water. Levees failed to block surging flood waters. The Army Corps of Engineers responded, helping with hundreds of thousands of sandbags.

This bill threatens to make losers out of the people who suffer from these natural disasters. The Small Business Administration (SBA) helps homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes, and private nonprofit organizations to fund repair or rebuilding efforts and cover the cost of replacing lost or personal property destroyed by disasters. The SBA sets up temporary disaster loan outreach centers where small business applicants can apply for low interest loans and information and updates. The SBA lets natural disaster victims submit disaster loan applications for damage and losses from storms, tornadoes, and flooding. Instead of submitting applications to the SBA, victims of natural disasters will be submitting applications to join the "Loser Club."

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) receives applications for assistance in the form of grants and loans. Private insurance companies deny many claims. Private in-

surance may not be enough to cover the losses. Specialists from the FEMA go on foot and help families with losses from natural disasters. They offer loans up to \$200,000 to repair or replace real estate; \$40k to repair or replace personal property, at low interest rates. Once funding is stripped from this disaster loan program, are people going to be happy with the interest rates that are provided courtesy of their Loser Club membership?

My home state of Texas ranks 43rd in education, and last (50th) in the nation in people over 25 who only have a high school education. This bill will destroy the hopes and dreams of people who are striving to improve those numbers. With this bill, our children will be given a "Loser Club" education and go on to earn "Losers Club" degrees.

An alternative plan, put forth by Senate Democratic and Republican Majority and Minority Leaders HARRY REID and MITCH MCCONNELL, respectively, deals with the debt ceiling crisis in a way that is less controversial for Democrats. Although still in the negotiation stages, the plan has a few emerging ideas and general bipartisan support in the Senate. However, House Republicans have expressed their dissatisfaction with the proposal.

Tentatively, the Reid-McConnell debt ceiling proposal would allow the President to raise the debt ceiling 3 times in the next year in an amount totaling \$2.5 trillion. Furthermore, it permits Congress to vote on a resolution of disapproval of each increase of the debt ceiling, essentially assigning blame to President Obama for each increase. It includes a plan to reduce the deficit in the amount of \$1.5 trillion over 10 years through cuts to domestic programs, while avoiding cuts to entitlement programs or raising new taxes.

Moreover, the Reid-McConnell debt ceiling proposal would create a new Congressional panel tasked with coming up with, by the end of the year, a way of reducing the deficit by another \$2.5 trillion or more through cuts in entitlements and other yet-to-be identified steps. The proposed committee would be comprised of 12 lawmakers who would issue a report to Congress on how to achieve this. While I am still not convinced that the cuts for this proposal will not unfairly harm our seniors and other beneficiaries of domestic programs, I anticipate the product of these negotiations, as they appear to be far more realistic than the bill before us today.

I urge my colleagues to consider the constituents in their home districts who would be hurt by the "Tap Dance, Loser Club, and Bust Bill." My Republican colleagues who support the passage of this bill seem more concerned with advancing their own agenda rather than with resolving a debt ceiling crisis that is placing our economy in great peril. Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke warned that defaulting could "throw the financial system into chaos", and "destroy the trust and confidence that global investors have in Treasury securities as being the safest liquid assets in the world". Instead of injecting ideological spending cuts and bizarre Constitutional amendments, into the traditionally non-political business of raising the debt ceiling, we must work quickly to pass a bill that makes good on our debt obligations and restores confidence in American credit.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are advised to heed the gavel and

consume only the time yielded them by the managers of the floor.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I would just remind Members of what the leader on the other side said, wondering whether Members have actually read the bill. If Members do read the bill, they understand that Cut, Cap, and Balance, as provided before us, actually does those three things and allows us to pay the bills at the same time.

With that, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. ROSS).

Mr. ROSS of Florida. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, for the last 30 years, I have spent my life as a husband, a small business owner, and a State legislator. And one thing I have learned from this is that common sense is not so common here in Washington, D.C. As a husband, I know it would be irresponsible to buy a shiny new car or a new boat when my family couldn't afford to make their mortgage payment or their food payment. As a business owner, I know that when I didn't have enough to meet my expenses, I didn't raise revenues on my customers. I cut back my expenses. And as a legislator, I knew that with a balanced budget amendment, we could operate a State successfully. In the State of Florida, we did that. You do not see Floridians running down the street hungry and rioting. No, you see Florida living within its means because of a balanced budget amendment.

Mr. Speaker, those opposed to this plan are frightened. They are frightened because they know that any cuts agreed to in "deals" aren't binding on a future Congress and a balanced budget amendment is. They know that Cut, Cap, and Balance brings real spending reductions today and will force government in the future to get an agreement of the whole family, the supermajority, to go into debt or raise taxes. A balanced budget amendment is common sense. The American people are watching, and their patience is wearing thin.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARRETT. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. PALAZZO).

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, with a record debt level of \$14.2 trillion, unemployment at 9.2 percent, and our spending habits out of control, Americans are searching for answers. They are searching for a plan that gives them real hope, a lifeline that will pull them out of the water and onto solid ground. The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act is that lifeline. It is a simple plan with guaranteed results.

Raising the debt ceiling without serious spending reforms would be nothing more than a green light for more of President Obama's failed spending programs, more job-destroying tax hikes, and more crushing debt. The President's policies have us borrowing 40 cents on every dollar we spend and will make our children foot the bill. This

will bankrupt America and jeopardize our children's futures.

We must take extraordinary action to solve our debt problems, and I urge my colleagues to support the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act. By making immediate cuts and bringing Federal spending in line with historic averages, we can promote job growth, sustain our Nation's economic viability, and ensure that the future of America is secure. Mr. Speaker, Members of Congress, let's throw Americans a lifeline and vote "yes" on the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, it does not throw Americans a lifeline to write into the Constitution of the United States a provision that creates a preference for cutting Medicare and Social Security over cutting subsidies for oil companies.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARRETT. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON).

(Mr. BARTON of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am one of the original sponsors of the tax limitation/balanced budget amendment under the Contract with America back in 1995. I have got one of the most conservative voting records in the House over the last 25 years. Common sense tells you that our budget problem today is a spending problem. It is not a revenue problem. And as the first law of ditch-digging says, When you are digging a hole, in order to fill it, you've got to stop digging it deeper.

President Obama's budget that he submitted to the Congress earlier this year does not have a budget deficit of less than \$500 billion over a 10-year period. Cut, Cap, and Balance may have some technical issues with it, but the basic premise is sound: We need to spend less money short term, this year; we need to spend less money in the next 5 years; and we need a constitutional amendment that locks into place that we, over time, have to balance our budget every year unless there is some act of war or national emergency going on that takes a two-thirds vote to override. Vote for this bill later this evening.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New Jersey has 30 seconds remaining.

Mr. GARRETT. At this point, I will yield that 30 seconds to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, one problem that I see from my colleagues across the aisle and the President is that many of them have never signed the front of a paycheck. They have only signed the back of a paycheck. I was a small-town banker for 8½ years. I practice the five Cs of credit: character, capacity, capital, collateral, and cash flow.

If our country was held to these same standards, President Obama would

never get the loan that he's asking for. I have struggled on this vote because of the \$14 trillion of debt that our Nation faces. President Obama has yet to come up with a plan that changes our spending trajectory, but this House has. Cut, Cap, and Balance—it's not just any plan, but it's revolutionarily reformed the way Congress spends money.

We aren't \$14 trillion in debt because we tax Americans too little. We're in debt because Congress has spent too much money. We don't have a revenue problem, folks. We have a spending problem.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from New Jersey has expired.

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN) is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. JORDAN. I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. I thank the gentleman from Ohio for that.

Folks, reforms like a balanced budget amendment, coupled with spending caps and significant spending cuts, are the types of revolutionary reforms that can prevent our children and grandchildren from inheriting mountains of debt. Passing off the debt problem to them may be the easy way. But it is not the American way, and it's definitely not the Christian way.

As President Reagan said, "You and I, as individuals, can, by borrowing, live beyond our means, but only for a limited period of time. Why, then, should we think that collectively, as a Nation, we're not bound by that same limitation? We must act today in order to preserve tomorrow."

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I would point out that when Ronald Reagan was President, he raised the debt ceiling 17 times and specifically wrote to the Congress, saying that failure to pay our bills would jeopardize the creditworthiness and trustworthiness of the United States. Let's not make that mistake. President Reagan didn't want to make that mistake.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH).

□ 1730

Mr. FATTAH. Members speak with so much certainty about these things. It's not what we know that's the problem. It's what we know that just isn't so.

Now, first and foremost, when we look at the Constitution of the United States, and we look at article I, when we deal with the legislature, among other things, the items or powers granted to the legislature, the first one is to borrow on credit on behalf of the United States. Now, if the Forefathers had no notion that we would be borrowing, they would not have granted this as the first enumerated power to the legislature.

But let's deal with this more commonsensical misinformation that's

been shared on the floor. They said, well, most families have to balance their budgets. No, our families have mortgages. They don't wait till they get homeless to then go the bank to try to get a roof over their family's head. They borrow so they can have a home.

They don't wait until they need a car; they borrow the money to have the car.

They said most businesses balance their budget. The manufacturers in my district don't wait until their machines fall apart to recapitalize their business. So we need to stop dealing in falsehoods here and know that our country, the greatest superpower in the world, has to act in responsible ways.

I encourage a "no" vote on this proposal.

Mr. JORDAN. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from the great State of Louisiana (Mr. LANDRY).

Mr. LANDRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in favor of H.R. 2560.

We need to set the record straight. See, the President said we don't need a constitutional amendment to make government do its job. I don't see why he cares. He normally ignores the Constitution most of the time.

He says he will veto this bill if it comes to his desk. Well, he can go ahead and veto it; but if he does, it is he who is choosing our seniors over everyone else. It is he who is choosing not to move America forward.

Let's look at the record. House Republicans reluctantly passed a CR which was diluted by him and the Senate. We passed a budget, something the Senate hasn't done in 811 days, and something the last Congress didn't do in the last year of the last Congress.

I'm sorry if they don't like our plan, but the President hasn't even put up a plan. He gives us no choice.

So, no, Mr. President, we don't need a balanced budget amendment, but you do.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to rise and support Cut, Cap, and Balance.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE
The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has a plethora of advisories. First of all, Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

Secondly, personally disparaging remarks directed at the President of the United States are inappropriate.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO).

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, we're broke. Everyone from the small business owner in West Virginia to Standard and Poor's and Moody's is looking to Washington to solve this fiscal mess.

We have a responsibility to demonstrate that we can responsibly raise the debt ceiling by changing the way Washington treats the taxpayers' dollars. The reason we're in over our heads is not because we're taxed too little; it's because we spend too much.

The bill before us today, Cut, Cap, and Balance, is a tangible idea that demonstrates we have to pay our bills while making sure our future credit card statements are not budget-busting.

If we want to protect our seniors and our grandchildren, encourage small business, and create jobs and safeguard the American Dream, we need to get our economy back on track. That starts with living within our means. It's about time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JORDAN. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HULTGREN).

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, the American people know that Washington has a massive spending and debt problem that threatens not only our Nation's credit rating, but our fiscal future.

As a father of four, I understand the threat our Nation's fiscal crisis poses to them and to others in their generation. A child born today inherits more than \$45,000 of debt, an astounding and terrifying statistic.

It's clear that Congress needs to cut spending to ensure that America remains strong and prosperous for future generations. We must fight both the threat of downgrade and the threat of default. This commonsense bill provides a guide to doing just that, without raising taxes on job creators.

We must force this government to live within its means, preserve our Nation's sterling credit rating, and fight for a brighter future for our kids and our grandkids.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support the Cut, Cap, and Balance bill and send it to the Senate with the strongest possible support.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I still fail to see how it helps our kids and helps our seniors to write into the Constitution of the United States a bias in favor of cutting Medicare and cutting Social Security and cutting education before cutting special interest tax breaks. They would require only a majority to cut Social Security and Medicare, but two-thirds to get rid of special interest tax breaks for the purpose of reducing the deficit. That's why this is a question of priorities and a question of balance.

How do we reduce the deficit? How do we get it into balance?

I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY).

Mrs. MALONEY. I thank the gentleman for his leadership and for pointing out the priorities and the focus and the injustice and unfairness of the Republican proposal.

At a time when Congress should be laser focused on finding new ways to grow our economy and create American jobs, we find ourselves, once again, bogged down in producing the Republican version of "Waiting for Godot." We all know that this bill will

never become law, that it is going nowhere in the Senate.

Their slash-and-burn cuts have not created a single job for hardworking middle class families. And, in fact, most economists say that cutting too deeply, too strongly would hinder economic recovery and could return us to a recession.

For the average American family, the Republican proposal would mean a cut in their future prospects, a cap on their dreams for tomorrow, and balancing the budget on the backs of America's seniors, while they refuse to even look at cutting a special interest tax break or subsidy. They continue to subsidize companies that send our jobs overseas and subsidize record-breaking profits that our oil companies have, but they're subsidizing some of them to the tune of 40 percent.

The Republicans have brought us to the brink of a national default in an effort to force the American people to accept their ideological agenda.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, before yielding to the gentleman from Indiana, let me just say this: This idea that there's no chance this will pass the Senate, how do we know? We don't know until we send it over there. Maybe HARRY REID will have the courage to bring it up on the floor. We don't know.

You know what? Every Friday night when they get ready to play the game, there's always one team that's favored, maybe heavily favored. But they still kick the ball off, they still play the game, and sometimes the underdog wins.

In fact, anything of real magnitude that's ever happened, the conventional wisdom was, it can't happen. So how do we know?

I'm sick of this argument it can't happen in the Senate. We don't know that. If the conventional wisdom always won out, there wouldn't be a United States of America. This is one of those historic moments. And to say this thing can't pass the Senate is just plain wrong, just plain wrong.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. JORDAN. I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Here's the question. As you know, this requires that we later pass a constitutional amendment. In fact, between now and August 2 we have to pass a constitutional amendment which, of course, requires two-thirds in the House. We'll find out by later this evening whether or not this bill will even get two-thirds in the House.

Mr. JORDAN. I think it's going to get 218, and we'll send it to the Senate. At some point we may be able to get two-thirds. That's our whole goal. This bill needs 218.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. The point is, this bill says you can't continue to pay the bills unless, between now and August 2 or whenever—

Mr. JORDAN. I know what the bill says.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. We pass a constitutional amendment with the provisions that you have in here. And so it will be a test today whether you can get the two-thirds to change the Constitution in the ways you're talking about.

□ 1740

Mr. JORDAN. Reclaiming my time, is the gentleman from Maryland suggesting that if there are some changes made to the balanced budget amendment in our legislation that there would be 50 votes in the House to support it on your side?

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I've already indicated that there is a conversation to be had with respect to what is a reasonable approach, but that is absolutely not what we're dealing with in this particular bill as we've debated.

Mr. JORDAN. That's good to know.

Reclaiming my time, so what you're saying is you guys actually think the balanced budget amendment is a good idea and something we need.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. We believe, as the President said, the best way for us to balance the budget is to get together and hammer out a deal sooner rather than later.

Mr. JORDAN. Oh, that's really worked well over the last 40 years.

I yield 15 seconds to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON).

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the American people who may be paying attention to this whole debate may be a little confused; so let me just sum it up in one sentence: They want to spend more, they want to tax more, and we don't.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, if what the gentleman is saying is that we think we should get rid of a lot of the pork barrel spending in the Tax Code, whether it's oil subsidies or whether it's for corporate jets, yes, we think we should get rid of some of that stuff for the purpose of reducing the deficit.

Mr. JORDAN. Will the gentleman yield for a question?

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. We have a lot less time; otherwise, I would.

If the Speaker would tell us how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio has 23¾ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Maryland has 40½ minutes remaining. Then the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) will control 30 minutes.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JORDAN. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY).

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, we've had a great debate here on Cut, Cap, and Balance. All the points have been made. But as I sit here and listen to this debate, Mr. Speaker, I can't help but notice the hypocrisy.

We're dealing with the other side, who is the advocate of three wars.

They have a \$1 trillion stimulus bill, a \$1 trillion-plus ObamaCare, and they don't want to come to the table and have a conversation about how we're going to reduce spending in the U.S. Government. And then we hear all this conversation about tax loopholes. Well, welcome to the party.

Mr. Speaker, 2 months ago, we had a bill on the floor where we did away with all these loopholes and reformed our tax codes and they did nothing to support that reform, and now they demagogue our plan again.

We hear about sending jobs overseas. Well, jobs are going overseas because we're taxing our businesses too much. When you tax them too much, they go other places. And when they go other places—like China, India, Mexico, and Vietnam—they take our jobs with them.

I've heard a lot about Medicare. The only party in this House who has cut Medicare is the Democrat Party—\$500 billion out of Medicare in an IPAB bill that is going to ration care for our seniors.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will again remind Members to heed the gavel and consume only the time yielded to them.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I would urge my colleagues to look at the Congressional Budget Office analysis of the impact of the Republican budget on senior citizens on Medicare. Essentially what they do is give seniors a raw deal compared to what Members of Congress get themselves, a raw deal in a big way.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Louisiana, Dr. FLEMING.

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, but for the President of the United States who serves today and a Democrat-controlled Congress over the last 2 years, we wouldn't be here today debating this; \$3.8 trillion added to our debt and continuing on that same glidepath.

Mr. Speaker, we're here today because people across America—businesses, cities, States—all have to balance their budgets. The only game in this country, the only entity that doesn't have to balance its budget is the Federal Government, and that's what has ruined our economy.

So all we're asking for in this bill is simply to immediately cut \$111 million in fiscal 2012; begin capping our spending rates, bringing it down to what's traditional, 18 percent; and then, finally, passing a balanced budget amendment that will finally put the restraints on this body, on the President of the United States, and certainly on the Senate, finally, so we will begin doing the people's work and allow this economy to flourish once again.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOUTHERLAND).

Mr. SOUTHERLAND. Mr. Speaker, every second of every day Washington adds another \$40,000 to our national debt. In fact, by the time I finish speaking this sentence our national debt will increase another \$360,000—\$360,000 in one sentence.

We've reached the edge of a cliff, and it's going to take tough decisions and responsible leadership to eliminate this massive, massive debt. That's why today I rise in support of H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act of 2011. I support it because it's right, not because it's a Republican plan, but because it's a commonsense plan. It's the American family plan.

Every American family cuts their budget, caps their budget, and balances their budget with their own finances; so should Washington. That is not an unfair expectation. To argue against this is to argue against common sense. This is to say, as bad parents do, "Do as I say, not as I do." That is bad parenting, and that's also bad legislation.

Unfortunately, over the past 3 months, our efforts to get serious about this crisis have been met with scare tactics. Enough. Enough of the political parlor tricks coming out of this city. It is time for us to do the job that the American people sent us here to do: practice common, walking-around sense. That's what my grandfather taught me. That's good at home; that's good in the family; that's good in small business; and it is good enough for Washington, D.C.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, American families don't have the luxury of saying if we don't get things 100 percent our way, we won't pay our family bills.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT).

Mr. CHABOT. Our national unemployment rate is stuck at over 9 percent. We're currently borrowing 43 cents on every dollar that's spent around here, and our national debt stands at a staggering \$14.5 trillion. The American people are demanding that we in Congress provide real solutions to these serious problems. The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act does just that.

The debate today is not whether we should make good on our current obligations. We're all in agreement that we must pay our bills, but the spending in Washington is out of control and it has to stop. We have to cap future spending, and passing a balanced budget amendment is critical to doing that; because, let's face it, historically Congress has shown no will or the ability to stop its addiction to spending.

Right now, back in my district in Cincinnati, hardworking Americans are making tough decisions, tightening their belts, and making sacrifices to pay their bills. They expect us to do the same.

Now let's do the right thing and pass this critical bill.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JORDAN. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE).

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, this has been a fascinating debate. Members on both sides of the aisle stand and claim moral superiority when it comes to the debt that we've accumulated. There is plenty of blame to go around.

When Republicans had majorities in both the House and the Senate and when there was a Republican in the White House, we behaved badly, from No Child Left Behind to prescription drug benefits, bloated farm bills, swollen highway bills, bridges to nowhere, pork strewn everywhere. Let's be honest, we were headed toward this fiscal cliff long before the current President took the wheel.

□ 1750

So here we are today, Mr. Speaker. It matters little who drove what shift. What matters is that we, both parties, are teetering on the fiscal cliff, getting ready to drag the country into the abyss.

Fortunately, the 2006 midterm elections sent many of us on a detour on the road to Damascus, and we are here today with a cut, cap, and balance plan that will put us back on sure financial footing. If the other side of the aisle has a plan that does not entail more of the same behavior that got us here, we should consider that plan. To date, we have seen no such plan.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this cut, cap, and balance legislation.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I agree with a lot of what the gentleman said.

I would say that the President has put a plan on the table to reduce the deficit by \$4 trillion over about 10 years. It does it with \$3 in spending cuts to \$1 in revenue. That approach apparently was rejected by our colleagues.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, you know why it was rejected? Because it is the same old game. It is exactly the same old game. The cuts come in the out-years; the tax increases come now. And, oh, here we go again. And, yes, there are no specifics to it. It is the same old game.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM).

Mr. ROSKAM. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I sit back, and as we are watching the debate today, I have got to take my hat off to the gentleman from Maryland, who I think has the toughest job in the whole Chamber, Mr. Speaker; and that is, he is basically, today, the lawyer for the status quo. And that's a tough job. That's a tough argument to make. No matter how thoughtful the arguments have been on this side of the aisle that there is an urgency, no matter how poignant the

arguments are that there is an urgency, no matter how jarring the unemployment figures are at 9.2 percent, no matter what the rating agencies are saying, the gentleman from Maryland is basically saying: No, no, no, there's a better plan.

But I would submit that there is no better plan. There is no more balanced plan than cut, cap, and balance.

Most Americans as they are listening to this debate, they are hearing Washington, D.C., basically say hold the line. Defend the status quo. Lash ourselves to the mast and we're going to get around the cape, by golly, if we only stick on the current course. Well, the current course is a failure. There's nobody who can defend the status quo with a straight face.

What happens now is this majority has come up and said: Okay, there is a pathway forward, and the pathway forward is immediate short term and long term. And I don't see what the argument is.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ROSKAM. I am happy to yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I thank the gentleman.

If what you mean by protecting the status quo is meaning that I am opposed to actually manipulating the Constitution of the United States to make it harder to reduce special interest tax breaks, yes, I don't think we should change the Constitution that way. But if you mean we should—

Mr. ROSKAM. I will graciously reclaim my time.

Furthermore, they are doing it in an orderly basis; that is, amending the Constitution forthrightly and directly.

I think, in closing, Mr. Speaker, my hat is off to the gentleman from Maryland who, no matter what the majority has come up with, always comes up with some argument that just defies logic. But I think most Americans, as they are listening to this debate, are saying cut it, cap it, and balance it. And do it now.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I think what will defy the logic of the American people is why our Republican colleagues are going to write into the Constitution of the United States a provision that says a majority vote is needed to cut Medicare, a majority vote is needed to cut Social Security, a majority vote is needed to cut education, but you need two-thirds vote to cut subsidies for Big Oil companies, you need a two-thirds vote to get rid of subsidies for corporate jets. That is something that defies logic.

You would also write into the Constitution a provision that says even if you balanced the budget at 19 percent of GDP or some other level so that we can meet the needs of Social Security and Medicare, you wouldn't be able to do that. You would constitutionally prohibit that kind of balanced budget, one that meets the needs of Social Security and Medicare beneficiaries. That defies logic.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, what defies logic is a \$14 trillion debt and the Democrats' unwillingness to say let's do what everyone else has to do. Let's put a balanced budget requirement in the Constitution so that politicians have to do what they have to do in their homes.

Obviously, the other route didn't work. So what part of \$14 trillion don't you understand? What part of balancing the budget don't you understand?

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I understand \$14 trillion and—

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio controls the time.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair, understanding that there are passionate arguments on both sides, would ask all Members to observe the decorum of the House and conduct debate accordingly by speaking one at a time.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the distinguished majority whip.

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. I thank my colleague from Ohio for yielding and for his work on this legislation.

It is interesting to listen to the debate, and that is healthy. That's why we are on this floor.

"Defying logic," an interesting term. Defying logic, when you think of a debt limit. What is a debt limit, and why are we debating it?

The debt limit, to the American people so you understand, is to pay for the obligations that this government has already promised.

So let's think about defying logic.

The economy is tough, so I sat in this House and I watched the other side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, put together a stimulus bill where I even watched their own people stand on the floor and say they didn't know if it would work. At the end of the day, defying logic meant \$278,000 for every job that was created.

Defying logic to the American public is that more people in America today believe that Elvis Presley is alive than the stimulus created a job. Defying logic is that we have gone 28 straight months with unemployment above 8 percent. Defying logic is to continue this pattern. But today we have a debate. Today we have a choice. Today we can take a new path.

I understand why so vigorously you fight this; because it would be a change to America. It would change the direction. And the one thing I would ask is: When will the assault on the American people stop? That would be defying the pattern of where we are going to go.

So I want to ask you one thing. We ask in this bill to cut where you had government spending, just discretionary, gone up 84 percent in the last 3 years—to small business, that would be quite odd that they weren't able to

do that—that we are going to cap it so it can't grow out of control, and then we're going to ask for a balanced budget that 49 States even have as a statute.

What I want to say today is a new path. It is not a path to repeating mistakes; it is a path to a new future. When you think of a balanced budget and you question whether it will pass, you know, 16 years ago we came one vote shy in the Senate. It passed this body with fewer people on this side. That meant people on the other side of the aisle voted for it. There are some of the people in your leadership who have voted for it.

Now, I want the American people to think and imagine, imagine had we gotten that one vote, the debate today would not have taken place. The debate today would not be about \$14 trillion. The debate today wouldn't be that we had to change the path. The debate today would be about the future of this country. What do you think we would be debating? What investments we would make to continue to make this country strong? What ability we could grow with our businesses, and it wouldn't be about unemployment.

So I want to harken back to a former President who said we could go to that shiny city on the hill. My charge is for this body to join us on that climb because this is the first step. And when we get there, we will recharge that light so this country burns brighter with freedom and liberty than it has in times before.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, there are some things that we want to change, and there are some things we don't want to change. One of the things we don't want to change capriciously is the Constitution of the United States of America.

I think many of us think it is a corruption to the Constitution to write in provisions that say you can only balance the budget the way the Republicans want to balance the budget; you can only do it by capping things at 18 percent even if that means deep cuts to Social Security and deep cuts to Medicare.

□ 1800

We think it's a corruption of the Constitution to write into the founding document a provision that says it's easier to cut Medicare and Social Security than corporate tax breaks. That is in here. We keep hearing 49 out of 50 States. Forty-nine out of 50 States do not write those kind of provisions into their State Constitutions—a very few do—and for good reason: They're bad ideas, they're bad ideas now, and they will be bad ideas in the future which would constrain a Congress from balancing the budget in a way that reflects the will of the American people.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I would just add, 38 of those 50 States would have to agree to this before the Constitution would be amended. The gen-

tleman can say, oh, we're going to write this in. The States get to decide this. That's the other part of this equation.

I would yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. GOWDY).

Mr. GOWDY. I want to thank the gentleman from Ohio for yielding and for his leadership on this and so many other issues.

Mr. Speaker, the President says he wants to do a big deal. He says he wants to do something transformative. He wants to do something that will echo in eternity. And he's willing to risk his political career to get it done.

History tells a very different story. In 2006, Senator Barack Obama joined 47 Senate Democrats in voting “no” on raising the debt ceiling. This, the first post-partisan President, cast a decidedly partisan vote in joining every single one of his colleagues in saying “no” to raising the debt ceiling. Did calamitous have a different definition in 2006? Was reneging on your debt somehow more palatable in 2006? Was the apocalypse not blowing in 2006? In 2007 and 2008, when again this body voted on raising the debt ceiling, the President, who was a Senator from Illinois, was absent for both votes.

Fast forward to President Obama. He has proposed a budget that raises this debt by trillions of dollars, with no spending cuts, and then he famously invites our colleague, PAUL RYAN, to the White House to lecture him on sensitivity and entitlement reform while offering absolutely no plan whatsoever on his own for entitlement reform. Then he said he wanted a clean debt ceiling increase, free from the nuisances of spending cuts, entitlement reform, and personal responsibility.

How do you go from voting “no” on raising the debt ceiling to saying you want a clean increase in the debt, to now saying you want to do something transformative that echoes in eternity?

Mr. Speaker, the President says he has a plan. Forgive our skepticism. I'd like to see the plan. I prefer cut, cap, and balance over punt, pass, and kick.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would congratulate both floor managers as we are at 38¾ minutes on the majority side and 38 minutes on the minority side.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Chairman, I haven't read Ayn Rand for 45 years, so all I have as a reference point is what I've observed over the last 20 years in this body.

I remember when we were trying to pull out of the last recession in 1990. George H.W. Bush called the leaders of both political parties together. They came up with a compromise. They raised revenue, they cut spending, and they started to pull us out of the recession. The economy started rebounding.

President Clinton followed suit. In fact, he raised the top tax rates to 39.6 percent. Now we heard at the time all of the Republican arguments, that you should only cut spending, you can't raise new revenue because it's going to cost jobs, and so on. Not one Republican vote was cast for the tax increase, but what happened? We know what happened. Twenty million jobs were created. We had surpluses. We had the strongest economy in modern history. We reduced welfare. We grew the middle class. Homeownership increased. And we handed over a surplus, a projected surplus, of \$5.6 trillion. In fact, this year we would have paid off our public debt. And what happened to those who paid at that highest rate of 39.6 percent? They brought home more after-tax income than at any prior time in American history. It worked.

And now your party comes in with this attitude we've been hearing about all day, you want to drastically cut taxes, shrink government, and ensure a permanent indebtedness. In fact just this spring you voted for a Republican budget that increased the deficit by \$8.8 trillion, from \$14.3 to \$23.1 trillion over the next 10 years. But now you don't want to pay for it.

That's what happened during the last Bush administration. We didn't pay for anything. We didn't pay for tax cuts. We didn't pay for wars. We didn't pay for expansion of Medicare. That's why we're in the hole that we're in.

Alan Greenspan said, “Restore the Clinton tax rates.” Every Republican in 2001 and 2003 voted to let the Bush tax cuts expire in 2011. Do it. Be responsible. Pay off our debts. Let's get back to policies that work with a government that deserves the trust of its citizens.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are again reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) control the balance of my time, who will also take over the final 30 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Wisconsin will now control 38¾ minutes.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT).

Mrs. BIGGERT. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill. It's no secret that our Nation's \$14.3 trillion debt poses an extraordinary threat to our financial future, and extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act would finally end the fiscal uncertainty and force the Federal Government to put the interests of the taxpayers first.

Our colleagues across the aisle claim that this plan goes too far by restricting future borrowing, but the reality is that this bill simply caps spending at the same sustainable rates as past generations, about 20 percent of GDP, a post-World War II average.

For too long, government has spent the taxpayers into a debt they cannot afford. Cut, Cap, and Balance would show our creditors, our competitors, and the American people that we are willing to make the tough choices needed to restore confidence and growth in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, it's time to cut the spending and give American businesses the certainty and stability they need to create jobs.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PLATTS).

Mr. PLATTS. I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

I rise today in support of H.R. 2560. It is important for the President and Congress to reach a final agreement on the debt ceiling that helps restore fiscal responsibility in Washington, honors America's obligations, and puts our Nation back on the path to prosperity.

It is clear that our economy will continue to struggle until Washington demonstrates the ability to get our spending and our debt under control. As the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, has stated, our national debt is the biggest threat to our national security.

The Cut, Cap, and Balance bill before us addresses our Nation's spending and debt challenges in a manner that stops delaying hard decisions. We immediately cut spending by over \$100 billion, we cap spending in future years at less than 20 percent of GDP, and send a balanced budget amendment to the States for ratification.

At \$14 trillion and counting, our national debt currently is quickly approaching 100 percent of GDP. The Federal Government is borrowing 40 cents of every dollar it spends. America cannot continue on this unsustainable fiscal path. The full faith and credit of the United States Government depends on Congress acting.

I urge a "yes" vote.

□ 1810

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN).

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. I rise in opposition to the drastic cuts to Social Security, Medicare, and other crucial Federal programs that this Cut, Cap, and Balance Act would force on the American people. The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act takes our Nation closer to default by holding the debt ceiling hostage until Congress passes a constitutional amendment to limit Federal

spending to 18 percent of GDP. The last time Federal spending was below 18 percent of GDP was 1966. Even under Ronald Reagan, the Federal spending averaged over 22 percent of GDP. There's almost no conceivable way to revert spending back to the 1960s levels without sharp cuts in every program, including Medicare and Social Security. In order to reduce Federal spending to 18 percent of GDP, every Federal program, including Social Security and Medicare, would need to be cut by 25 percent.

Faced with the need to increase the debt ceiling in 1987, President Reagan called on Congress to raise the ceiling and said failure to do so would threaten those who rely on Social Security and veterans benefits, create instability in the financial markets, and cause the Federal deficit to soar. It's funny, I agree with President Reagan.

Our last balanced budget was in 1999 and 2000, the last years of the Democratic President Bill Clinton. Since 2001 we had 9/11, federalizing airport security, war in Iraq, Afghanistan, war on terror, a prescription drug plan for seniors, and 2001 and 2003 tax cuts—none of these were paid for—all went to the National debt. We had a balanced annual budget without cutting Medicare or Social Security in 1999 and 2000. It is time for this chamber to end the political theater, to take the necessary steps to avoid default, and I urge my colleagues to oppose this dangerous legislation.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. HURT).

Mr. HURT. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 2560. We are in a spending-driven debt crisis that continues to stall job creation, passes a crushing financial burden on to our children, and affecting all Fifth District Virginians. Since President Obama took office, our national debt has increased by \$3.7 trillion, raising our current total debt to an unacceptable \$14 trillion. Now, after 2½ years of reckless spending, the President is asking that we raise the debt ceiling once again. But we have yet to see any concrete plan from this administration to help rein in the out-of-control government spending that has brought us to the brink of a debt crisis.

So the House is once again leading in delivering on the message sent by the people of Virginia's Fifth District to change the culture in Washington and end the government spending spree by putting forth a commonsense proposal that will cut, cap, and balance Federal spending and force Washington to live within its means. Now is the time to put in place effective spending reforms to reduce our debt and deficits, return certainty to the marketplace, and preserve the American Dream for our children and grandchildren.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield 1 minute to the distinguished Democratic leader, the gentlelady from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I commend him for his

tremendous leadership as the ranking Democrat on the Budget Committee and for bringing to that debate and that discussion at the table the values of the American people and the concerns they have as they sit around their kitchen table.

They are concerned that this Saturday will mark the 200th day of the Republicans attaining the majority in the House of Representatives. And yet today another day goes by when we do not have a jobs bill on the floor. Indeed, we should have a jobs bill. This isn't a jobs bill. We should be working together to lower the deficit, to grow the economy, to create jobs; and we should be doing so in a balanced, bipartisan way. Instead, we have before us what is called the Republican plan to cut, cap, and end Medicare.

This legislation is the Republican budget that was voted on earlier this year all over again. Wildly unpopular among the American people, the Republican budget, again, ended Medicare, made seniors pay more for less, while it gave take breaks to Big Oil and corporations sending jobs overseas. It made kids pay less for their education while it gave tax breaks to the wealthiest people in our country.

As our Republican colleague, Congressman JIM JORDAN, chairman of the Republican Study Committee, which is the source of this budget, said on Sunday, this legislation basically mirrors the budget proposal that the House passed this year. And indeed it does. It is summed up in one sentence: it ends Medicare, making seniors pay more, while giving take breaks to Big Oil and corporations sending jobs overseas. Furthermore, economists believe that the result of this legislation will be the result of the loss of 700,000 jobs.

This legislation harms middle class families. But don't take my word for it. Nearly 250 national organizations oppose this legislation, saying it would almost certainly necessitate massive cuts to vital programs like Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, veterans benefits, and lead to even deeper cuts than the House-passed budget.

Mr. Speaker, I heard the previous speaker say we have to think about future generations as we go forward in this debate. Indeed, I agree. For that reason, I call young people to my office over and over again, and most recently, last week, a large group of college students, some just newly graduated, and I said, Your name is used at the table of the debt reduction; your name is used at the table that we owe this to future generations. I'd like to know from you as a member of the next generation, as a leader of the next generation, what do you think about what's going on at the debate table, the discussion table in the White House? What do you think of that? What values do you want me to bring from your generation to that table?

With great wisdom they talked about the fact that education was central to their success and to America's competitiveness now and in the future.

They talked about jobs. They said, Please don't have the cuts in the legislation deter job growth and growth of the economy. They said, Please don't harm Medicare and Medicaid, because that's very important to our families. In fact, for many of our families, that enables them to afford our ability to go to college. We just wouldn't make it without that.

Actually, one other thing they talked about was, We want to share in reducing the deficit. We believe that everyone has a responsibility to do so, but we want our voices to be heard. And we're concerned with voter suppression now around the country and that barriers will be thrown up that will hurt our participation in the electoral process. So when I went to the White House, I spoke about that.

But yesterday I met with high school students, well over a hundred high school students. I asked them the same question. They had similar answers. They also said, Tell them if they care about the future generations, they should care about our education, they should care about the budget deficit, they should care about jobs. They should also care about the environment, because the condition of the environment is important to us.

But going back to those college students, that day I went into the White House and told my colleagues—the President, the Vice President, and our Democratic and Republican colleagues—what those college students said about education, for example. And then I listened to the discussion and I thought, Who is going to tell the children? Who is going to tell the children that at this table the suggestion is made that young people should spend \$36 billion more for interest on their student loans so that we can reduce the deficit, but not touch \$37 billion—almost the same number—\$37 billion in tax subsidies for Big Oil. Who's going to tell the children that that is what the values are that are being proposed by the Republicans at that table—\$36 billion more charged to students, \$37 billion as a gift to Big Oil. But don't touch that to reduce the deficit.

It's stunning to me.

So as we use the name of the next generation and what we owe them and what they expect as they come out of school or what they need in order to afford school, in some cases that increase in the cost of interest payments will make it prohibitive—not more expensive—prohibitive for young people to go to school. One young man in high school said to me yesterday, I just graduated from high school at the top of my class. I had great grades and scores and everything, but I can't afford to go to college. I can only go to the community college in my town because I can only afford to be close to home and go to a community college. So please, in whatever it is you do, don't hurt community colleges.

□ 1820

Community colleges are wonderful, and they do a great job for our country and the education of our children and the training of our workers and the rest. I had the privilege of speaking at the graduation commencement ceremony at San Francisco Community College last month, so I value what they do; but this young man had no choice because the cost of other education to him would be prohibitive, and again, because of the economic situation, he had to stay close to home.

So let's listen to these people whose names we use—the next generation, the young people. We cannot heap mountains of debt onto them. Indeed, we shouldn't. Indeed, we didn't. When President Clinton was President, he took the deficit that he'd inherited on a path of fiscal soundness. Four of the five of his last budgets were either in surplus or in balance. You've heard that over and over again. He took a \$5.6 trillion trajectory into surplus, only to be reversed by President Bush with his tax cuts for the rich, with his giveaways to the pharmaceutical industry and by not paying for the wars. He took us on a trajectory of a swing of \$11 trillion—the biggest fiscal swing in the history of our country.

That's the path we're on.

I didn't hear anybody on the Republican side say “boo, boo” when the President was taking us so deeply into debt; and every time, we stepped up to the plate and lifted the debt ceiling because that was the right thing to do.

Much has been said, if we don't lift the debt ceiling, as to what that means to our economy. We hear sounds from the tables in boardrooms about what it will do to the stock market, the credit markets, what it will do to the fiscal soundness of our country, our reputation overseas—and that's very important. Yet it's not only important what is said around the boardroom table; it's important as to what this means around the kitchen table for America's working families.

American families could soon see an increase in their cost of mortgages, car loans, credit cards, and student loans. Social Security and veterans' checks could be held up. Stock prices, which are important to our economy, could fall with a direct hit on families' 401(k)s, pensions and savings. It would be a job destroyer, heaping more economic insecurity on America's families and on the concerns they have as to the education of their children, the health of their families and the security of their retirements around that kitchen table. Rather than making progress on the debt limit to prevent these widespread consequences for America's middle class, this legislation takes us backward: throwing up further roadblocks to increasing the debt limit.

Mr. Speaker, we still have time to come together in a bipartisan and balanced way for a “grand bargain” that would ensure our Nation meets its obligations while working toward a long-

term plan to reduce the deficit, create jobs, grow the economy, and strengthen the middle class.

Let us recognize that the best way to reduce the deficit is to get the American people back to work. Let us do as the President called upon us to do: to out-build, out-educate, out-innovate the rest of the world to win the future by creating jobs. Together, we can keep America number one.

I see my distinguished friend from Indiana is here, and I heard his one-sentence summation earlier. I won't repeat it, but I'll give you my one-sentence summation on this:

This legislation ends the Medicare guarantee, making seniors pay at least \$6,000 more while giving tax breaks to Big Oil and corporations sending jobs overseas.

I hope that some of our Republican colleagues will do what they did before and vote against this budget plan. A majority of Republicans voted against this budget plan when it came to the floor the day of the Ryan budget. I call upon all of us to do the right thing for the next generation and vote “no.”

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds only to say that the only place where our budget mentions oil is when we say we want to drill for more of it in our country. We don't address the tax issue. In fact, what we call for is eliminating loopholes to lower tax rates. We save Medicare, and guarantee the program is there for people 55 and above—more importantly, contrary to the current law, which takes Medicare away from current seniors as they now know it.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the House Republican Conference chairman, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING).

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, this Nation suffers from a surplus of deficits.

First, our seniors have a health care deficit because, in the last Congress, Democrats cut Medicare by a half a trillion dollars, hastening its bankruptcy and then creating a new board, called the IPAB, in order to ration the access and quality of their health care.

Next, they brought us a jobs deficit. Millions are unemployed and they remain unemployed—the highest duration of long-term unemployment since the Great Depression.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we have the financial deficit. After the President's trillion-dollar stimulus program, which has failed miserably, after his \$1.4 trillion takeover of our health care system, after an increase of base government—24 percent in 2 years and three trillion-dollar-plus deficits in a row, we now have a debt crisis. So the President says, Do you know what? We need a balanced plan. I want you, Republicans, to raise taxes to pay for my spending.

Mr. President, one of the greatest impediments we have to job creation today is the threat of taxes to pay for your spending.

Every day, I hear from small business people in my congressional district. I heard from Kristine Tanzillo of Canton, Texas: "Washington seems to think they can tax its way out of our economic problem, which is not possible. We are not hiring or planning to grow for the next several years. We are concerned that our government will raise taxes or put other burdensome restrictions on us that we will not be profitable."

The financial deficit is tied to our jobs deficit. The American people have a message for their government:

It is time to quit spending money we do not have. It is time to quit borrowing 42 cents on the dollar, much of it from the Chinese, and then sending the bill to our children and grandchildren. It is why, today, House Republicans bring to the floor the Cut, Cap, and Balance program.

Cut. It cuts spending to at least the '08 levels. Who thought that government was too small before President Barack Obama came into town?

Cap. Since World War II, spending has averaged 20 percent of our economy. Under this President, it's 25 percent, growing to 40. Let's keep it at 20 percent.

Balance. Every family in America has to balance their budgets around the kitchen table. Every small business has to balance their budgets as do 49 of the 50 States. But no. Our Democrat colleagues said it is radical. It is radical to balance the budget.

What I say is, if we want jobs, hope and opportunity, we must cut, cap, and balance.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I would again remind my colleagues that the last time the Federal Government budget was in surplus was during the Clinton administration, at a time when they took a balanced approach to deficit reduction—unfortunately, one that has been rejected by our colleagues in the communications and conversations with the President of the United States, who has put forward a proposal for \$3 in spending cuts, for \$1 in revenue, again, generated by closing special interest loopholes and by returning to the rates that were in place for the very top income earners, rates that were in place during the Clinton administration, which was the last time we were in surplus.

With that, I yield 3 minutes to a member of the Judiciary Committee, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), who has been a real leader on this debate.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I oppose this legislation, and I would like to focus my comments on the balanced budget amendment because the dirty little secret about the balanced budget amendment is that it does not require a balanced budget.

□ 1830

It will actually make it more difficult for future Congresses to balance the budget, so the title is just misleading.

Let's go through some of the provisions.

The first provision of the balanced budget amendment requires a budget not in balance to require a three-fifths vote in the House and the Senate. The fact is every budget that we considered this year—in fact, most of the budgets, virtually every budget in the last 10 years—was not balanced in the first year. So all of those budgets, including the Republican Ryan plan, even the Republican Study Committee plan, would have required a three-fifths vote to pass in both the House and the Senate.

Now, the deficit reduction requires tough votes, often career-ending votes. The 1993 Clinton budget that was on the way to paying off the national debt, if we hadn't changed it after 2001, we would have paid off the entire debt held by the public. By now, we would owe nothing to China, Japan, and Saudi Arabia. But that didn't get three-fifths of the vote, and 50 Democrats lost their seats as a result of that plan.

Likewise, this year's Republican Ryan plan, which repeals Medicare as we know it, is a good deficit reduction plan. Didn't get anywhere close to three-fifths, and Democrats have already picked up one seat in the special election because the Republican candidate supported the Republican Ryan plan.

So deficit reduction requires tough votes, and increasing the votes needed to pass it will not help pass a deficit reduction plan.

Now, while it's harder to pass a deficit reduction plan because of the three-fifths requirement, increasing the deficit can still occur. Last December, we passed \$800 billion in additional deficits by extending the tax cuts. Those still could have been passed under this legislation because you only need a simple majority to cut taxes. And a budget which even proposes additional tax cuts and even higher deficits would require the same three-fifths vote as the tough deficit reduction would require.

Tax cuts can pass by a simple majority, but tax increases will require a two-thirds vote. Common sense will tell you that that will make it harder to balance the budget.

The two-thirds provision to spend more than 18 percent of GDP will obviously put pressure on Medicare and Medicaid, since we haven't been to 18 percent of GDP since Medicare was enacted. You can cut the benefits with a simple majority, but to save the programs with additional taxes will require a two-thirds vote.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we know that we should not be distracted by misleading titles. We should notice that the legislation will make it harder to actually balance the budget because it increases the number of Members who might have to cast career-ending votes, makes it virtually impossible to raise revenues or close loopholes. It will compel deep cuts in Social Security

and Medicare, and you can't cure that with a simple nice little title.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS).

Mrs. LUMMIS. We don't have to pass this bill to read this bill. We know what's in it. It's been online for 72 hours. The American people can go read it.

But in case you haven't read it, let me tell you what it does. It caps spending. It caps spending consistent with the discretionary spending cuts that we passed in the budget earlier this year. And it cuts some mandatory spending in 2012, setting us on the path that Moody's and S&P say they need to ensure investors that they can have confidence in U.S. treasuries.

It will create the glide path that Ben Bernanke has told us over and over that we need to bring spending under 20 percent of GDP. And it will pass a balanced budget amendment, like the vast majority of States have. This is the way to implement what we need to raise our debt ceiling.

We know that we cannot default on our debt, so we will raise our debt ceiling in a way that Standard & Poor's and Moody's have said they need to see in order to assure our borrowers that our currency is valuable, that our obligations will be met, and that we are going to get our spending under control.

As the chairman of the House Budget Committee said a few minutes ago, when we passed his budget, we passed a plan that would broaden the base of taxes and lower the rate, that would not cut Medicare for seniors, for people over 55 years of age who aren't yet on Medicare, did not touch Social Security, and yet would preserve for the American people the decisions that this country was founded on.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I just remind my colleagues that only seven States placed both the supermajority requirements and the caps that this would place in the Constitution of the United States.

With that, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY), who has been a leader and fighter in this debate.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. This Republican bill cuts, caps, and balances all right—cuts Medicare, caps Medicaid, balances the budget on the backs of seniors. And Republicans like to say that the public supports a balanced budget amendment. But when you ask them if they support balancing the budget by making cuts to Medicare and Social Security, by a 2-1 margin, the American people say "no." And what liberal media outlet conducted that poll? Fox News.

There is something very, very wrong and un-American with the Republican proposal that makes it far easier to cut Medicare than to cut subsidies for oil and gas companies, easier to cut Social

Security than ask for one penny more from millionaires and billionaires.

Of course we need to address our economic challenges, but not by holding our country hostage and threatening to not pay our bills with catastrophic consequences that will hurt every American in order to push an extreme agenda that cuts Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

We have a jobs crisis. We have a disappearing middle class crisis. And this illogical bill, which has no chance of becoming law, will make things much worse.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. At this time I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama, the chairman of the Financial Services Committee, Mr. BACHUS.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, we just heard that we were cutting Medicare; but, in fact, it was the minority party that cut \$500 billion out of Medicare last year to pass ObamaCare. How quickly we forget.

Mr. Speaker, at one time, people stored cash under their mattress for safekeeping. Now people all over the world put that same money in treasury bills. That benefits every American in countless ways. Let's not lose that advantage.

The imminent threat to the safe haven of treasury bonds and our national security is default and downgrade. However, by far, the overriding danger is too much government spending. The Federal Government must do what every family in America is called on to do at times when things are tight. That's cut spending and live within their means.

As long as we ignore our spending problem, the economy will weaken, confidence will not be restored, jobs will not be created. We, and more profoundly, our children and grandchildren, will bear the costs.

Earlier, the minority leader said: What will the students say? What will the children say?

Let me say this. When we say to them your money's all gone, we spent it, we lacked the courage to address the problems, we didn't confront the problems, what will our children say to us? What will our grandchildren say?

The heritage of America has never been "can't do"; it's always been "can do." We can do it. We can rise to the challenge. We can answer our children and our grandchildren in future years and say we did the right thing for you. We did the right thing for our country. We confronted the problems.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, what the Democratic leader asked was how could we tell the children that we chose to reduce the deficit by cutting their ability to afford college rather than cutting subsidies for the oil and gas industry? Those are the kind of choices we're making. This is not a question about whether to reduce the deficit. This is a question about how we do it and what priorities we have. And we think it's absolutely the wrong pri-

ority to put in the Constitution of the United States a preference to cutting education, to cutting Medicare as compared to cutting subsidies for special interest corporations, special interest tax breaks for the purposes of reducing the deficit.

With that, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

□ 1840

Mr. ENGEL. I thank the gentleman.

I've listened to this debate for a while now. The American people want us to compromise. The American people are in the middle. That's where most of the American people are. And they don't want extremes from either side.

So what would we do logically to find a solution in the middle to close our budget deficit? We would, first of all, cut spending. Secondly, we would close tax loopholes to big corporations. And, thirdly, we would let those who can afford to pay more, pay more.

The President has proposed something like this, a \$4 trillion reduction in the deficit, and the Republicans have refused to do it. They refuse to even plug loopholes from Big Oil and Gas.

So this is where we are now. It takes two to tango. If they're going to vote "no" on anything that closes tax loopholes, then we have to just raise the debt ceiling.

Now, we voted seven times under President Bush to have a clean debt ceiling raised, 28 times under President Reagan to have a clean debt ceiling raised, and yet the Republicans won't do it and they bring us to the brink of disaster.

The truth of the matter is we don't need extremes. And, as was pointed out here before, this will end Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security as we know it because it will make it easier to cut those programs than it is to cut subsidies to Big Oil. That is shameful, and this should be rejected.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield myself 30 seconds to simply say, I think the gentleman threw Social Security in there for good measure in the budget. That is assumed. Underneath these caps, it doesn't address Social Security. It probably should.

But, more to the point, Mr. Speaker, guess what ends Medicare as we know it? The current law, the President's health care law. It raids \$500 billion out of Medicare to spend on another program, and then puts a board of 15 unelected, unaccountable bureaucrats in charge of price controlling and, therefore, rationing Medicare for current seniors. Medicaid's going bankrupt. If you want these programs to succeed, you have to reform these programs.

Leaders see the problem and fix the problem. That's what we propose to do.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. NUNNELEE).

Mr. NUNNELEE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding.

Today the majority of Americans don't believe that successive generations will enjoy the quality of life that they've enjoyed, and a lot of that fear is driven by unrestrained Federal Government, unrestrained spending, because the majority of Americans understand the proverb: The borrower is the slave to the lender.

Just a few hours ago, Harper Grace Nunnelee entered the world. And today, in her honor, her grandfather will cast a vote to secure the blessings of liberty for Harper Grace and for her brother, Thomas, and for their successive generations yet unborn. And I hope that a majority of my colleagues will join me as we vote to cut, to cap, and to balance.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I think we would all agree if we saw a wasteful spending program, we should cut it for the purpose of reducing the deficit. And the question is: If there is a wasteful or unnecessary special interest tax loophole, why shouldn't we cut it for the purpose of reducing the deficit? Why should we write into the Constitution of the United States a provision that says you need two-thirds to cut a wasteful tax loophole rather than say let's cut it to reduce the deficit for the benefit of our children?

I would also observe, Mr. Speaker, that the Republican plan, with respect to Medicare, would force seniors out of the current Medicare system into the private insurance market where the private insurance industry would ration their care. They would get a lot less support from the Medicare program and yet face much higher costs.

That is a deal that Members of Congress don't give to themselves, and I don't think we should ask seniors to take a deal that Members of Congress themselves do not take.

With that, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI).

(Mr. GARAMENDI asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, Americans want jobs. After 200 days of Republican power in this House, not one jobs bill. This cut, slash, and burn legislation will not work.

We need an invest, grow, and build strategy. That's what Americans want from Congress. They want us to invest in education, invest in research, and invest in innovation so that America can remain a leader in the global economy. They want us to invest in infrastructure, build bridges, highways, clean energy and cut our dependence on foreign oil, because when we make it in America, that's when America will make it. Americans can make it.

Cut, yes. What we ought to cut are the Republican giveaways to the Big Oil companies, to the Wall Street barons, to the hedge fund managers who enjoy massive tax breaks. That's where the cuts ought to be. They ought to be cut out.

And what of this legislation that's before us? We ought to vote "no."

Cut what doesn't create jobs for middle class families, like Republican giveaways to big oil companies. And save what actually works, like innovation to jumpstart new industries and education to help middle class people get good jobs.

I therefore rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act. This bill is an extreme version of the Republican budget plan that would make permanent the dangerous budgetary and constitutional measures that would destroy Medicare and Medicaid, and reduce Social Security benefits for those who need them the most. The bill would also handicap the government's ability to respond to economic downturns and create jobs, and it fails to address some of the real drivers our debt—tax breaks for corporations and the rich and runaway Pentagon spending, including our misadventures in Iraq and Afghanistan.

This legislation is an affront to the very principles of this nation. In 1961, President John F. Kennedy in his inaugural address said, "If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich." Unfortunately, it seems that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have no regard for this fundamental American value, as the bill they have brought to the floor today attempts to balance the budget on the backs of those with less for the benefit of those with more. It attempts to balance the budget on the backs of seniors, by taking away their Medicare benefits. It attempts to balance the budget on the backs of the disabled, by taking away their Social Security benefits. It attempts to balance the budget on the backs of low-income Americans, by taking away their Medicaid. And who stands to gain from taking away Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security benefits? Special interests and the rich.

In addition to taking away Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security benefits, H.R. 2560 would also subvert the federal government's ability to respond to downturns in the economy or special needs including a possible national security crisis. During inevitable cyclical downturns, it will be necessary to raise the debt limit to stimulate growth by cutting taxes and providing unemployment benefits to help people get back on their feet if they're laid off, among several proven effective measures. Furthermore, in the event of a security threat, we have an obligation to act. This bill, including the proposed balanced budget constitutional amendment would make it nearly impossible to respond to any economic or security crisis.

At the root of all of this is a system of misguided priorities. My Republican colleagues have determined that in order to balance the budget, we should prioritize cutting Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security benefits, instead of addressing what got us into this current deficit—a porous, lopsided tax code designed to make the rich richer, and two unnecessary wars, one of which we continue to wage. This bill does nothing to end the tax breaks we currently provide for millionaires and billionaires, hedge fund managers and oil companies. Nor does it address runaway Pentagon spending. Based on CBO's most conservative estimates, the DOD alone is projected to spend nearly \$300 billion on the Afghan and Iraqi wars from 2012 through 2015, and estimates by Harvard researchers which take into account long-term costs like caring for our veterans put the total cost of these wars in the trillions. Rather than

ending tax breaks for corporations and millionaires and billionaires and bringing our troops home from Afghanistan, my friends on the other side of aisle want to cut Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security benefits for those Americans who need them.

I urge my colleagues to see this charade for what it is—an attempt to balance the budget on the backs of those with less for the benefit of those with more—and vote "no" on H.R. 2560.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds to say, I hope the gentleman joins us in supporting our plan, then, because our plan says let's get rid of all those tax loopholes. Let's make the tax code flatter and fairer. Let's get tax rates down for all Americans and for businesses so we can grow our economy.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I will not.

Here is the deal, Mr. Speaker. When we tax our businesses at higher rates than our foreign competitors tax theirs, they win; we lose. Some companies utilize loopholes and pay no taxes. Others pay the second-highest tax rate in the industrialized world.

Yielding myself 15 more seconds, I would simply say, Mr. Speaker, that the goal here is to get rid of all these loopholes so whoever you are, no matter what you make, you pay the same amount of tax rates.

We need to reform this Tax Code so we create jobs. If we simply raise taxes, raise spending, borrow more money, we lose jobs. This debt is a threat to our current economy, and the Tax Code is a current threat to our economy.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from New York (Ms. BUEKLE).

Ms. BUEKLE. I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act. This legislation is strong medicine, Mr. Speaker, but it is what will cure what ails the American economy.

For far too long, Washington has overspent, borrowed, and heaped debt upon our children and our future children. If we don't make a change with cut, cap, and balance now, the American Dream will go away; and our children and our grandchildren won't have the opportunities that this country has always offered.

It's time for the Federal Government to get our spending under control; and this legislation, Mr. Speaker, is a good first step. It's a reasonable plan, far more than we've seen from the Senate or from the President. It is the only plan that will cut, cap, and balance, and do what we need to do for this economy.

Mr. Speaker, Washington has a spending problem. It does not have a taxing problem.

I would just remind the Speaker, in December, a Democratic-controlled House, a Democratic-controlled Senate, and a Democratic President passed

a bill to extend the current tax rates because they knew what would happen if we raised taxes in an economy as sluggish and as poor as this one is right now. Raising taxes is the wrong thing to do for this economy and for this country.

Mr. Speaker, most States have balanced budget amendments. It's time for the Federal Government to do the same. This massive spending-induced debt is crushing the American Dream. We must stand up for the American Dream and do what's right for America.

I urge my colleagues to pass H.R. 2560, Cut, Cap, and Balance.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, this certainly is the only plan on the table that would insert a provision into the Constitution of the United States that makes it easier to cut Medicare and easier to cut Social Security than it is to cut subsidies to oil and gas companies or other special interests for the purpose of reducing the deficit. We think that's a bad idea. That's why it's not part of the President's balanced plan to reduce the deficit by \$4 trillion over 10 to 12 years.

□ 1850

With that, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT).

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, this bill has a slogan for a title and unrealistic nonsense inside. Under this, millions of students would not get Pell Grants, and education and related programs would be cut by about 25 percent.

And further, for the third time, yes, the third time, the majority is voting today to end Medicare and double health care costs for seniors. We shouldn't be surprised that the majority is squeezing out Medicare. They never liked it in the first place.

We shouldn't be surprised that they are reducing education grants. They promised they would.

We shouldn't be surprised that they want to preserve subsidies and giveaways to Big Oil and other fat cats because that's been their *raison d'être* for a century.

We should be surprised, or at least disappointed, that they want to sacrifice America's credit rating and good name. We should be disappointed too that they won't allow Congress to get on with the work, the hard work, the important work of actually making jobs.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, as previous speakers have said, we do not have a revenue problem, and we don't have just a spending problem. We have a doing problem.

The Federal Government for several decades has expanded beyond our core constitutional responsibilities and, in so doing, we have created the financial crisis in which we find ourselves today. A balanced budget amendment would

be a great addition to the Constitution, in conjunction with and for the 10th amendment.

For, indeed, what we refer to as federalism is a solution to our problems and the salvation to this country. And this bill before us today is an excellent first step on our way to that ultimate salvation.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS).

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I want to bring the debate back to real people, to seniors who've been contacting my office sharing their fears, their concerns over inaction in this Congress over the debt crisis.

A widow from San Diego called to ask if she'd get her social security check after August 2, the payment she earned working hard for years and years. She doesn't know how she's going to pay her Medicare premiums, her mortgage, her grocery bills or her prescriptions.

Our constituents do expect us to work together to solve serious problems. Yet we seem to be stringing the American public along here, playing games with their futures.

This legislation was put together in the dark of night and brought straight to the House floor. My colleagues didn't hear from one witness on its consequences, didn't hold one hearing, and completely bypassed the regular legislative process.

Instead of wasting valuable time on legislation that won't move beyond this Chamber, we should focus on forging a bipartisan solution to the debt crisis. Let's agree on meaningful and rational solutions for the long term before the debt crisis becomes worse.

We can do one with job creation that won't slash health research, innovation, Medicare, Medicaid or education.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG).

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, we're broke, and that's really not the legacy that I want to leave Micah and Claire, my grandkids.

More unrestrained spending and tax increases will only slow our economy and make our fiscal problems worse. Raising the debt ceiling without significant reform is not a solution. It's a gimmick. We have to get our spending under control; and Cut, Cap and Balance is a path to fiscal responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, this year alone the Federal Government will spend twice what it spent just 10 years ago, and more than 40 percent of it is borrowed money. We will have accumulated more debt in the past 2½ years than we did during the Presidencies of Washington through George H.W. Bush. That's right. It took 41 Presidencies to spend what we have spent since 2009.

We've got to stop spending money we don't have. It's causing the private sector to sit on the sidelines, take fewer risks, and create fewer jobs. And that's what it's all about, isn't it, growing the economy, creating jobs?

The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act automatically saves \$111 billion in 2012 and around \$5.8 trillion over the next 10 years. It includes enforceable caps on spending that will bring the size of government back to below 20 percent of GDP. And the legislation cuts up the government's credit cards by passing a balanced budget amendment.

Cut, Cap, and Balance will create a future of better opportunities for our children, Micah and Claire, my grandkids. Washington will finally have to do what every American family and every business does every day, balance the budget.

This Saturday, I enjoyed an afternoon of kicking the walnut down the street with Claire and Micah, 4½ and 3 years old, but I don't want to kick the can down the road for them.

I didn't have the guts to tell them that we've already taken their tax dollars from them before they're even at the point of going to school and ultimately going to work.

We need to stop our spending now. Cut, cap and balance.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. I supported an honest, bipartisan balanced budget amendment in 1995. There is no balanced budget amendment in this legislation. There is a big dollop of legislative legerdemain and blackmail. It simply says that the Republicans will drive the country to default unless Congress later passes their right-wing version of a balanced budget amendment that requires an impossible two-thirds vote to close the most egregious tax loophole, the same loopholes that the gentleman from Wisconsin purports to want to close.

With apologies to Lewis Carroll, "There's no use trying," said Alice. "One can't believe imaginary things."

"I dare say you haven't had much practice," said the Queen. "When I was your age I did it for half an hour a day. Why, sometimes I believed as many as six imaginary things before breakfast," or in this case, before dinner and cocktails at the Republican Club.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. May I inquire as to the division of time between the two.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YODER). The gentleman from Wisconsin has 20¼ minutes, and the gentleman from Maryland has 21¾ minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT).

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, my reason for coming to the floor today is, look, there's already been some wonderful arguments, hopefully on our side, talking about cut, cap and balance being a realistic path to get there. But I'm here because the political rhetoric seems to lack basis in math. So let's have a little fun here.

How many times today have we already heard the comments about those corporate jets? We need to get rid of that depreciation.

Okay. Time for a little bit of mathematical reality. We borrow \$4.7 billion every year. If we were to eliminate that incentive for those corporate jet purchases, fine. But it takes care of 15 seconds of borrowing a day. How can 15 seconds of borrowing a day be an honest discussion?

So let's go on to the next one. How many times today have we already heard about evil fossil fuels, those subsidies to Big Oil?

Well, let's do this. If we were to wipe out the subsidies to all fossil fuels, it would take care of 2.2 minutes of borrowing a day. How's that an honest debate? So we're living in that fantasy world.

So let's actually go on to one of the other ones, the Bush-Obama tax extensions. You know, because how many times do we hear around here, oh, it's those millionaires and billionaires. Well, let's do this. What would the math be if you got rid of those tax extensions for all Americans? It would buy you 28 minutes of borrowing a day, and that's assuming you don't slow down the economy, you don't raise unemployment. Actually, we use the President's numbers and pretend you get every dollar in, 28 minutes a day.

So think about that. The rhetoric you've heard here for hours wouldn't even buy, or would actually only buy one-half an hour of borrowing a day.

So I turn to my brothers and sisters on the left and say, what would you like to do with the other 23½ hours of borrowing every single day?

□ 1900

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Again, I would remind my colleagues to do the basic math. Go back to the last time the budget of the United States was in surplus; it was during the Clinton administration. It followed on some very difficult decisions in the early 1990s. And what it included, as part of a balanced approach, was asking the folks at the very top to pay a little higher rate than they are today. And what the President has proposed is to ask those Americans, as part of a shared responsibility, to go back to paying those rates.

And what our colleagues would plant in the Constitution of the United States is a supermajority requirement, two-thirds vote, to go back to the same tax rates that were in place during the Clinton administration, but a majority vote if you want to reduce the deficit by cutting benefits for Medicare beneficiaries—whose average income, by the way, median income is under \$22,000 a year.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN).

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the Cut, Cap and Balance Act, which is nothing

more than a politically motivated distraction from the ongoing budget negotiations necessary to avoid a catastrophic default on our Nation's financial obligations. What we need at this challenging time is shared sacrifice.

The Democrats have called for significant cuts, closing tax loopholes, and requiring people in the highest income brackets to pay their fair share while Republicans continue to push an unrealistic plan that relies exclusively on draconian cuts—on the backs of our seniors, on the backs of working families.

One thing is clear: if we don't reach common ground now, America will default on its debt, and that cannot happen. The most dangerous provision of this bill is the Republican version of the so-called "balanced budget amendment." While a balanced budget amendment done the right way is worthy of consideration, it must, at a minimum, be crafted responsibly and provide flexibility in times of war, recession, or national emergency. This bill does not do that.

We all agree that the budget should be balanced; it needs to be. And Congress already has the necessary legislative tools to change its fiscal policies, as we witnessed during the era of surpluses under the Clinton administration. The challenge lies in our collective abilities and individuals' intentions to work together toward a compromise that prioritizes programs most beneficial to our economy, cuts trillions in spending, and increases revenues from those who can afford it.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute, if we're going into recalling history, just to simply say that the "corporate tax loophole" is a provision that was in the President's stimulus bill drafted by Democrats, passed by Democrats, not supported by Republicans. The "oil tax subsidies" were the result of a bipartisan legislation responding to a WTO suit which said that all American producers, manufacturers, domestic producers get lower tax rates if they produce something in America.

What the other side is simply saying is, no, let's just raise that tax on just oil and gas, not on any other manufacturer, and that is a subsidy for oil and gas.

Mr. Speaker, these provisions are so infinitesimally small, they're just fundamentally un-serious. They're just an attempt to score political points to try and dodge coming up with solutions to solve the problem. We have a debt problem we have to deal with; we have a deficit problem we have to deal with. If we don't deal with it, we're going to lose more jobs.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PAULSEN).

Mr. PAULSEN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it is true that we could, as some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle suggest, continue to

practice business as usual with no plan to control spending. But what will that lead to? Higher taxes, more spending, more debt, and fewer jobs. And with our country right now at a financial crossroads and unemployment at 9.2 percent, this is simply a future that we cannot afford. By cutting spending now, by capping growth of government, and by requiring a balanced budget, we can finally get our fiscal house in order and get people back to work.

American families have tightened their belts in these tough economic times; Washington should do exactly the same thing. We need to pass the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act so that we can address our spending-driven debt crisis, start paying down the national debt, and get our economy back on track. This is about protecting the future of our children and our grandchildren.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I find it very curious that on the one hand our Republican colleagues are saying that the revenues that the President has requested as part of a balanced plan are peanuts, that they're irrelevant, and on the other hand arguing that somehow if you raise those revenues it's going to crush the economy. They're trying to have it both ways. The fact of the matter is they are a balanced part of an overall approach that talks about reducing our deficit in a balanced way. And I go back to the fact that the last time we had that balanced approach was the last time that we had Federal budget surpluses.

With that, I yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from New York (Ms. CLARKE).

Ms. CLARKE of New York. I thank my colleague for the time.

Mr. Speaker, the Republican majority has spent over 6 months of the American people's time making it abundantly clear what their priorities are not. The Republican majority does not have time to address jobs. As I stated, we are here over 6 months into the 112th Congress, and we have yet to take one vote on a single comprehensive jobs bill.

The Republican majority does not have time to address the economic realities facing millions of homeowners still facing foreclosure. In fact, we have voted on Republican bills that further undercut those who have lost their homes.

The Republican majority does not have time to work with the President and congressional Democrats to deal with our national debt. They would rather protect tax cuts for multi-millionaires and billionaires and tax loopholes for corporate interests.

What the Republican majority does have time for is playing games, spending 4 hours debating a bill that, thank God, is dead on arrival in the Senate.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

After a 3-year spending spree in which the President drove up the national debt 56 percent, he has the nerve to tell the American people to eat their peas. After he has been on this supersize-me diet, he turns around and tells struggling middle class families how to behave.

One must ask, where has the President been? He owns this economy. He has been in office nearly 3 years; it is his. It's his policies that have left 15 million Americans out of work; it's his policies that have stifled growth and business investment; it's his policies that have created and are continuing these so-called "tax breaks" for Big Oil. It's his very signature that has extended the Bush tax cuts.

It's his policies that have given us the highest deficit spending in the history of the United States of America. He owns this, not President Bush, not Vice President Cheney, not the Republican Party, not Halliburton, not all the other straw men that the President likes to set up to distract the American people. It was President Obama who cut Medicare \$562 billion. It was President Obama who set up IPAB, which is a health care rationing system which our moms and dads and grandparents will have to be suffering under. It was this President who took unemployment from 7 percent up to nearly 10 percent.

And now we're having the debate of the decade, and where is the President? We get from him, not a plan, but speeches, finger-pointing, rhetoric, vague promises, but no plan. If there is a plan, could you lay it on the table? And I'll ask my Democrat friends, do you have a plan? We keep hearing the President has a plan. Could you put it on the table? I might want to vote for it. I might be interested in reading the bill. If there is a plan, could you please put it on the table? Just as I thought, there is no plan.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield the gentleman an extra 15 seconds.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. The gentleman asked a question. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KINGSTON. This is the plan: cut, cap, and balance. And this is the President's plan: speeches. That's all we're getting, no legislation whatsoever.

I'll be glad to yield to my friend from Maryland.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Well-timed.

□ 1910

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman well knows, the President has put on the table a balanced approach, \$4 trillion in 10 to 12 years, \$3 in spending cuts to \$1 in revenue. In fact, the Speaker of the House and the President of the United States, as my colleagues well know, were talking about a number of components of that plan. What was very clear is our colleagues didn't want to touch it because

of this principle they have that not \$1 from closing a tax loophole or revenue can go for the purpose of reducing the deficit.

We heard a little rewrite of history. Let's just remember that when the President of the United States was sworn in, he immediately faced a record \$1.3 trillion deficit. The guy took office, and it was \$1.3 trillion that he inherited. And 700,000 jobs were going down the tubes every month. It took a little while to turn things around, and things are still very, very fragile.

What would be a huge mistake is to go back to the same trickle-down on steroids policy that got us into this mess to begin with, because we know how the movie ended at the end of the Bush administration. They left this administration with a pile of debt, an economy that was falling through the floor. We need to work together to fix this problem. But taking the position that you're going to prevent the United States from paying its bills unless you implant in the Constitution a provision that says it is easier to cut Social Security and Medicare than cut corporate tax loopholes to reduce the deficit is not going to fly with the American people.

With that, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the ranking member of the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. MARKEY. I thank the gentleman. A poll completed by Gallup just 3 days ago basically showed what Democrats have been saying all along—Americans want their Congress to come together to tackle our debt level with a responsible program of spending cuts and new revenues.

Here is what the poll said: 80 percent of all voters want the Democrats and Republicans to come together on spending cuts and tax increases; 77 percent of Independents, even 74 percent of Republicans agree. CBS has a very similar poll.

But what the Republicans are saying is we're not going to pay attention. The Republicans are suffering from deficit attention disorder. They've spent their time in power paying attention to everything but the deficit. They have deficit attention disorder. They extended massive Bush tax cuts for the rich. They voted to support billions in subsidies to the most profitable oil companies. They ran up trillions in debt to finance two wars; allowed Wall Street to run wild with deregulation and smash our economy onto the rocks, but they only want to focus on the deficit when it means ending Medicare, when it means shrinking Social Security. They only want to focus on the deficit when they can still protect billionaires and protect big business, Big Oil.

The Republicans have political amnesia. They controlled the Congress for 12 years. President Bush controlled the Presidency for 8 years. They are the ones that ran up this huge deficit on

their watch. And now what are they saying? They're saying pass a constitutional amendment before we win the Presidency again so we stop us from killing the economy again. Pass a constitutional amendment that doesn't let us do it again with a Republican President, with 12 years of controlling the House and the Senate.

They want to leave America on the brink of becoming a deadbeat debtor to the world because they are irresponsible, ignoring what the American people are screaming at them: work together as parties; have deficit reductions and revenue increases and tax increases on billionaires. But the Republicans refuse to come together. They refuse to ensure that not just grandma having a shrinking of her Medicare benefit, kids losing their Pell Grants, but also billionaires are at the table if this is such an Armageddon level of financial crisis facing our country.

But they are tied. They are tied back to the Tea Party. They are tied back to those who have tethered them to a policy that does not allow them to escape their deficit attention disorder.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD).

Mr. DOLD. I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for yielding.

We did hear some rhetoric on the other side that basically said we do have a plan, that the President has laid out a plan; it's clear. Well, frankly, the CBO—the Congressional Budget Office—has taken a look at that to say we can't score speeches. This is a very serious time. We do need to talk about a big, bold plan to put ourselves and our country back on the right course.

We just heard some rhetoric talking about how this was the deficit that the Republicans had run up. Let me tell you, yes, the Republicans have had some deficit spending. This is a bipartisan issue. Washington has a spending problem. We are spending \$1.6 trillion this year of money we don't have; 42 cents of every single dollar that we are spending is borrowed.

Mr. Speaker, I'm a small business owner. I employ just under 100 people. For me, that's 100 families. These are families that are living paycheck to paycheck. If I ran my business like the Federal Government is run today, I would be out of business inside the month. It is frankly irresponsible the way that this country is being run right now. We have to talk about tightening our belt. We cannot continue to spend the way that we have been spending and expect that we're going to get jobs. This is about jobs and the economy. We have to make sure that we're providing more certainty because I can tell you I have received phone calls from constituents and from business owners back in my district. There are 650 manufacturers in the 10th District of Illinois. They do need to have some certainty before they are going to invest back in their business and create additional jobs.

We cannot be looking at trillions of dollars in deficit spending and expect that this is going to be a jobs plan. We have to tighten our belt. The American public has tightened their belt. American families are living under a balanced budget in their own right. American businesses are doing the same. They should expect that their Federal Government should also live within their means.

There is no question that this is a very serious time. We are not going to become a deadbeat debtor. The way I tell my constituents back home, it is like purchasing a business. We think we have the best business in the world in the United States of America. And yes, it has got some debt, which we are obligated to pay. But we have to restructure how that business is taking on that debt if we are serious about wanting to reform it for next generations.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, it does not encourage certainty or confidence in the markets or anywhere else for one party to say that if they don't get the budget their way, they're going to prevent the United States from paying its bills. That sends a terrible message. American families don't have the luxury of saying that they're not going to pay their bills.

With that, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CLARKE).

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask this Congress to cut and cap the true debt that is crushing Americans right now, robbing them of any financial security and killing off jobs. I'm asking this Congress to take certain mortgage loans, cut those mortgage principals and cap them to current home value. Let's do that. That will help people who are underwater right now on their mortgages.

Let's cut, cap, and forgive certain student loans so Americans won't have to spend a lifetime repaying back on their education. You see, when you give Americans more money by eliminating their personal debt, they'll be able to save more and invest more and responsibly spend more. That's how you create jobs, the most powerful way. To get this economy engaged again is to help Americans become free of personal debt.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. MULVANEY), a member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. MULVANEY. "The fact that we are here today to debate raising America's debt limit is a sign of leadership failure. Leadership means that the buck stops here. Instead, Washington is shifting the burden of bad choices today on to the backs of our children and grandchildren. American has a debt problem and a failure of leadership, and Americans deserve better."

I wish I could take credit for that one, Mr. Speaker, but I can't because that was President Obama in 2006.

I also wish I could take credit for: "I'm willing to take down domestic

spending to the lowest percentage of our overall economy since Dwight Eisenhower."

I wish I could take credit for that. That was the President last week.

Finally, I wish I could take credit for the claim that the President is offering a comprehensive program to force us to live within our means. This is supposedly a \$4 trillion reduction in spending, four thousand billion dollars that in all actuality only cuts spending \$2 billion next year. Talk is cheap in this town, Mr. Speaker; it is time to match actions and words. It is time to act on the spending difficulty that we have and to pass Cut, Cap, and Balance tonight.

□ 1920

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me just quote from a letter:

"Denigration of the full faith and credit of the United States would have substantial effects on the domestic financial markets and on the value of the dollar in exchange markets. The Nation can ill-afford to allow such a result. The risks, the costs, the disruptions, and the incalculable damage lead me to but one conclusion, that we must pass legislation to raise the debt ceiling."

President Ronald Reagan.

Now, there's legislation floating around here that creates this delusion, into thinking that somehow we can get to that date and it's all made up, that Secretary Geithner cooked the books, and there's legislation that says, you know what, let's pay the Government of China and other creditors before we pay our troops, before we pay our Social Security beneficiaries.

What Moody's, what Standard & Poor's, what the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and others are telling us is, you can't decide to pay your mortgage but not your car payment. If the United States is not fulfilling its obligations to pay for what it has already bought, as Ronald Reagan said, that would have catastrophic consequences.

That is why it's so dangerous to take the position that somehow unless in the next couple of weeks we pass a constitutional amendment that would make it easier to cut Medicare and Social Security than cut subsidies for the purpose of reducing the deficit, if we don't do that, we're not going to allow the United States to pay its bills, and the economy, as President Reagan said, would go straight downhill.

With that, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY).

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Who are you kidding?

Cut, slash, and burn. You bypassed your own rules to bring it to the floor. You say it protects Medicare. It destroys Medicare. You say you're protecting jobs. You'll cost hundreds of thousands of jobs if this ever saw the light of day in law.

It disinvests in education, R&D, and infrastructure in this country. That equals unilateral disarmament when it comes to global competition and innovation, and we might as well hand it over to our competition in Brazil, China, and India.

Shame on you. I urge the defeat of this phony bill.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California, the chairman of the Government Reform Committee, Mr. ISSA.

(Mr. ISSA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, for more than an hour, I've listened to floor debate, and it seems like one side wants to say that we have to cut and the other side says that any cut we do is wrong. One side says we have to do tax increases. The other side says no.

What the American people need to hear, Mr. Speaker, is we now spend almost a quarter of every dollar produced in our economy, and as my now deceased father-in-law would have said, Taxes are rocks in your knapsack. The American people cannot afford to have more and more weight on the economy.

This is not an argument about how much we spend. This is an argument about what the American people can afford in overhead that ultimately hurts our competitiveness in jobs big and small, foreign and domestic.

So I will be voting for this and every other initiative that can possibly give the American people a fighting chance to compete for good-paying jobs here and in competition with the rest of the world.

I urge the support of the bill.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, again, the President's proposal, which mirrors the framework of the bipartisan Simpson-Bowles Commission, says we'll do \$3 in cuts with \$1 in revenue. It's shared responsibility to reducing our deficit so that our economy in the future can grow. Let's make sure that we don't do anything now that will hurt the fragile economy.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. PETERS).

Mr. PETERS. I rise today in opposition to H.R. 2560.

Since taking office, I have fought for greater fiscal responsibility in Washington. I have voted against hundreds of billions of dollars in new spending. And today there is a new bipartisan consensus that a comprehensive deficit reduction plan is a national priority.

Unfortunately, Republicans are squandering this opportunity. Rather than a balanced approach, they are pursuing a radical agenda that will force our Nation's seniors and middle class to sacrifice while letting millionaires and special interests keep their tax breaks and loopholes.

Let us be clear: A vote for this bill is a vote for drastic cuts to Medicare and for putting teachers, firefighters, and police all over our country out of work. Republicans need to stop playing games with our economy and start working for what the American people want: comprehensive deficit reduction that shares the burden, strengthens Medicare and Social Security, ends tax giveaways for the well-connected, and puts our country on a path to financial security. This bill fails to address these needs and should be defeated.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds to simply say, if we're talking balance, let's remember the fact that a big tax increase is already coming in current law.

Let's remind ourselves of the fact that in 2013, you have \$800 billion in taxes with the health care law. The President is promising another \$700 billion in tax increases. We've got a \$1.5 trillion tax increase coming, hitting small businesses square in the bottom line. It's putting a chilling effect on jobs, and in the interest of balance, they want to put more tax increases on top of that.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CANSECO).

Mr. CANSECO. Once again, in the debate over our Nation's fiscal future, the House of Representatives is leading. I commend my colleagues for bringing forward a solution to cut, cap, and balance the Federal budget. Together, these will help ensure that it is the Federal budget that will be restrained and not the family budget.

Regrettably, I cannot vote for this bill. I do so not because I have any issue with cut, cap, and balance. I strongly support that part of the bill. What I cannot support is that this bill fulfills President Obama's request to raise the amount of debt that will be borne by American taxpayers by over \$2 trillion. Every American household's share of our national debt is already at \$120,000, and President Obama has asked this House to add an additional \$20,000 per household to that burden.

It is regrettable that President Obama has asked Congress to raise the Nation's debt ceiling and allow more debt to be thrust upon American taxpayers in order to pay for the spending binge he embarked upon over the past 2 years.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin has 8½ minutes, and the gentleman from Maryland has 8¼ minutes.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL).

Mr. ISRAEL. I thank my friend from Maryland.

Well, they're right about something. This is cut, cap, and balance. Except that it cuts at the middle class, it caps Medicare, and it balances budgets on the backs of seniors. That is the fundamental difference between them and us, Mr. Speaker.

Look. We agree that our debt is unsustainable, and that we've got to tighten our belts. We've got to reduce spending. We believe that we need to balance our budget through a balanced combination of spending cuts and revenue increases, and we've got to grow our economy.

But here's what this budget says. It says to a constituent of mine living in Deer Park, New York, that if you're a middle class family and you want to send your child to college, to Suffolk Community College, you pay more for your Pell Grant. You pay more for tuition. If you are a worker in Huntington who just lost a job because the corporation that you are working for outsourced your job to China, you watch your unemployment insurance be capped or cut. But if you're a millionaire making over \$1 million a year, you get a \$100,000 tax cut. That's not cut, cap, and balance. It is an assault on the middle class, and it is an assault on fairness.

Mr. Speaker, the middle class has always been the backbone of our economy, and this legislation is a kick in the stomach to the middle class. They tell us that they want to cut spending. They will not cut spending when it comes to tax loopholes. They will increase it. They will not cut spending when it comes to those \$4 billion in oil company subsidies. They will increase it. They will not cut spending when it comes to special interest tax preferences. They will increase it. But when it comes to the middle class, they want them to pay more.

Mr. Speaker, the real cut, cap, and balance should be this: We ought to cut those tax loopholes, we ought to cap those tax subsidies, and we ought to balance this budget through the right and smart kinds of spending reductions and revenue increases that are fair.

I thank the gentleman for his time.

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Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Utah, a member of the Budget Committee, Mr. CHAFFETZ.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Routinely, the other side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, has made the allegation that the President has offered a balanced plan. I would argue that he has offered neither. The President has never introduced a balanced plan. He's never had anything that's in balance. In fact, the budget that he submitted never balances. In fact, it doubles and then triples the debt. It went before the United States Senate, and 97-0 that budget was rejected, rejected by the United States Senate. So to suggest that he's offered something in balance is not true.

The second part of this, he has not introduced a plan to deal with this crisis that we're in. There is no piece of paper. There's lots of speeches. There are lots of things like going out and doing press conferences. But we need a solution.

What cut, cap, and balance does is it not only solves the short-term prob-

lem—it starts to put us in the right pathway—but it actually sends it to the States. And, ladies and gentlemen, what should we be afraid of? All we're asking to do is put forward a balanced budget amendment and send it to the State with a very high threshold, where three out of four States would have to ratify it in order for it to become an amendment to the Constitution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. We keep spending money that we don't have. Every time we look at a decision, we have to understand we're asking to pull money out of somebody's pocket and give it to somebody else. Those days are gone.

I came to Washington, D.C., to change the way we do business. Cut, cap, and balance will do that. We need a balanced budget amendment. The choice is clear: Are you in favor of a balanced budget or not? That's what's before us today, and that's the direction this country needs to go to get its fiscal house in order.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS).

(Mr. ANDREWS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ANDREWS. I'd like to take time out for just a minute and go back to the question I'm hearing most people in America ask about, which is jobs. And one of the things we keep hearing from the other side is that asking ethanol producers to give up their subsidy or asking corporations to give up their special loopholes is a job-destroying idea.

Please, before you cast this vote, all Members look at these facts. In 2001, and again in 2002, we did what the majority says endlessly they want to do—cut taxes on the wealthiest Americans. The economy produced zero net private sector jobs between 2001 and 2008.

In 1993, President Clinton did the opposite of what the majority says it wants to do. He made a modest increase in the tax rate of the wealthiest Americans. The economy produced 23 million new private sector jobs.

The House deserves the facts in going forward in this debate, and the American people deserve a real jobs plan from this House.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I'll end where we started today, which is to say that our Republican colleagues are playing a very dangerous game with the economy and with jobs. What this legislation before us says is that unless we graft onto the Constitution a preference for their way of addressing the budget deficit, unless we do that, they will prevent the United States from paying its bills, with all the terrible economic consequences for American families.

So let's see what it is that they're demanding in exchange for letting the economy go. It's the same old plan that we saw in the House before. It does end the Medicare guarantee, it slashes Medicaid, it cuts education, and it protects special interest tax loopholes. But what makes this particularly egregious, what should, I think, upset every American, is they're trying to engineer those changes through the Constitution.

We keep hearing this is just a plain old balanced budget amendment; 49 out of 50 States have it. Not true. This would put into the Constitution of the United States, embed in our Constitution, a provision that makes it easier to cut Medicare or Social Security or education, a 50 percent vote; but if you want to cut a special interest tax loophole—I don't care whether it's oil and gas subsidies, corporate jet, you name it—that a lot of Washington lobbyists work overtime to get inserted into our Tax Code and which amounts to spending through the Tax Code, if you want to do that, you need a two-thirds vote.

They put another mechanism into the Constitution. They would make it unconstitutional to balance the budget if we're having expenditures at the rate of 19 or 20 percent of GDP, according to the provision that came out of their amendment. In other words, the American people cannot choose a level of expenditures that would allow us to meet our obligations under Medicare and Social Security. Since 1966, our Federal expenditures have been above 18 percent of GDP; in other words, since we enacted Medicare. So they want to prevent us by constitutional fiat from balancing the budget at a higher level of expenditures.

Let me make one last point on Medicare, because we've heard about the Democrats cut \$500 billion. What we did was we eliminated the 114 percent subsidy that was going to Medicare Advantage plans. We did do that. And, you know what? Republicans say, What a terrible thing. But if you look at their budget, they assume that change. They keep that change. What they don't do is what we did, which was to use the savings to close the prescription drug doughnut hole. The Republican budget would immediately reopen that doughnut hole. So they took the savings that they're complaining about, but they didn't use any of it to close the doughnut hole.

Again, the fundamental question is this. We all understand that we've got to reduce the deficit. We've got to bring the budget into balance. The question is how we choose to do that. And why would we implant into the Constitution a mechanism that stacks the deck in favor of choosing to cut Medicare and Social Security and education over choosing to cut corporate tax loopholes or asking the folks at the very top to pay more? But they would do that to our Constitution.

The Founders made it difficult to change the Constitution for good reason. This, I believe, is a corruption of

the constitutional process, because it would place these mechanisms into our founding document that essentially graft the Republican budget plan into that document. And that's what this vote is all about.

And what they're saying is that unless two-thirds of the House and two-thirds of the Senate adopt that kind of constitutional amendment, we're not going to pay our bills, bills which the Speaker of the House and the majority leader and people on both sides of the aisle should pay because they are the consequence of decisions that were made by this body. And right or wrong, when you bring up a bill, you can't say you're not paying for it. And if we take the position that we're not going to pay for it, the economy will suffer, interest rates will go up. That will hurt every American family, and it will make it harder for us to reduce the deficit.

So let's come together around a balanced plan. The President's put a proposal on the table: \$4 trillion over 10 to 12 years, patterned after the bipartisan Simpson-Bowles commission; \$3 in cuts, \$1 in revenue. Let's take a balanced approach. That's the way we did it the last time our budget was in surplus.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 7 minutes remaining.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, here's our problem. We have a crushing burden of debt that is coming to hit our economy. This is what it all comes down to. We are driving our country and our economy off of a cliff. The reason is because we are spending so much more money than we have.

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We can't keep spending money we don't have. Forty-two cents out of every dollar coming out of Washington—it's borrowed money. Let's take a look at where it's coming from. We're borrowing it, 47 percent of it, from other countries—China number one. Mr. Speaker, you can't have sovereignty, self-determination as a country, if we are relying on other governments to cash-flow half of our deficit.

This is where we are.

Here is the problem we have right now, Mr. Speaker. We have a leadership deficit. I keep hearing about the President has got a plan; the President is offering balance. The President hasn't offered a thing yet—nothing on paper, nothing in public. Leaning on reporters at press conferences is not leadership. Giving speeches, according to the CBO, is not budgeting.

The President did inherit a tough problem—no two ways about it. What did he do with this problem? He drove us deeper into debt: \$1 trillion of borrowed money for stimulus that was promised to keep unemployment below 8 percent, that went up to 10, and now it's at 9.2; a stalled economy; a budget the President gave us that doubles the

debt in 5 years and triples it in 10 years.

That's not leadership.

What has the other body done in the Senate, our partners on the other side of the aisle? Mr. Speaker, it has been 811 days since they bothered trying to pass a budget. Congress has gone for 2 years without a budget.

What did we do when we assumed the majority? We passed a budget. We wrote a budget. We did it in daylight, not in the backroom. We drafted it. We brought it through the committee. We had amendments. We brought it to the floor. We debated it and we passed it.

That is what we've done.

When you take a look at our problem, Mr. Speaker, you have to address what is driving our debt. Here are just the cold, hard facts: 10,000 people are retiring every day. The baby boomers are here, and we're not ready for them. Far fewer people are following them into the workforce. Health care costs are going up four times the rate of inflation. The Congressional Budget Office is telling us Medicare goes bankrupt in 9 years. Medicaid is already bankrupting our States. These are the drivers of our debt. By the year 2025, three programs—Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare—plus our interest, consume 100 percent of all Federal revenues. By the end of this decade, 20 percent of our revenues goes to just paying interest.

This is unsustainable.

So what does our budget do? What does the document that we passed that shows leadership on this issue do?

It saves these programs.

For Medicare, we say you're already retired if you're retired. If you're about to retire, we don't want to pull the rug out from under you. You organized your life around these programs, so let's keep it as is; but in order to cash-flow that commitment, in order to make good on that promissory note, you have to reform it for the next generation. Let's do it in a way that looks like the commission that President Clinton offered, a system that resembles the one we have as Members of Congress: where we get to choose the plans that meet our needs, where we don't subsidize wealthy people as much, and where we subsidize low-income and sick people a whole lot more. That's what a "safety net" is.

We fix it and we save Medicare.

What does the law do that the President does? It raids a half a trillion dollars from Medicare. It puts a new board in charge of price controlling and rationing care to current seniors, and it does nothing to save it from bankruptcy.

These are the issues that have got to be dealt with.

Mr. Speaker, we keep hearing about balance. We keep hearing about the need to raise taxes as we cut spending \$3 for \$1 or something to that effect. The red line shows Congressional Budget Office projections on spending. The green lines are taxes. Basically, what

this says is there is no way you can tax your way out of this problem. We asked the Congressional Budget Office. If we tried to do that—have balance, raise taxes—the tax rates on the next generation would be this:

The lowest income tax bracket that lower income people pay, which is 10 percent now, goes to 25 percent. Middle-income taxpayers would pay a 66 percent rate. The top tax rate, which is what all those successful small businesses that create most of our jobs pay, would go to 88 percent. That's according to the Congressional Budget Office. That's the path we're on right now.

This is unsustainable.

What is needed is leadership, and the reason we're talking about this debt limit increase is that we've seen none—none from the President, none from the other body. So, if we're not going to have a budget process, how on Earth are we going to get spending under control so we can solve this problem?

Our budget, this cap and this cut, gets the debt paid off. It puts us on a path to prosperity. It closes loopholes to lower tax rates to grow jobs. It says that the genius of America is the individual, is the business, not our government. It maintains the American legacy of leaving the next generation better off, and we know, without a shadow of a doubt, we are leaving the next generation worse off. In the good old days of 2007, we used to say that this debt was a threat to our children and our grandchildren.

Not so anymore.

It is a threat to our economy today.

Pass Cut, Cap, and Balance. Save this country. Grow the economy. Save the Nation for our children and our grandchildren.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, today I will cast my vote in support of H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap and Balance Act of 2011, despite having concerns about it. With the August 2 deadline for reaching a solution on our debt crisis fast approaching, I believe this measure is necessary in order to move the process forward.

However, I remain opposed to key provisions in H.R. 2560 and will continue to work vigorously for better solutions. My primary concern with this legislation is the requirement for a balanced budget amendment to the constitution. In 1995, I voted in favor of a balanced budget amendment. That effort ultimately failed in the Senate by a single vote. With the benefit of hindsight, we can see that that was the right outcome. Just two short years later, we proved that we could balance the budget without altering our most inspired founding document.

What's more, the State of California has proved the futility of balanced budget amendments for years. Despite a constitutional mandate for balanced budgets, California persistently fails to live within its means and spend the taxpayers' money prudently and effectively.

Exercising our Article 1, Section 7 power of the purse with responsibility and discipline doesn't take a constitutional amendment. It simply takes the will to do the right thing.

We have already accomplished something that seemed impossible just a few months

ago: we have fundamentally altered the conversation here in Washington. While the last two Congresses presided over an 82% increase in non-defense discretionary spending, we have already halted and reversed the growth in spending.

Now we are on the brink of enacting trillions—that's trillions with a "T"—in spending cuts. While a final deal remains elusive, we have forged consensus on the central, fundamental point that no rise in the debt ceiling can be enacted without trillions in spending cuts. That is a tremendous achievement that seemed barely conceivable a short time ago. It is a testament to what can be achieved when we have the will and resolve to confront the great challenges we face.

We must now put that will and resolve toward a final deal that will not only make trillions in spending cuts, but also enact meaningful reforms that put us on the path to eliminating the deficit, paying down our debt and fostering growth and opportunity. These solutions are within reach. They are closer than they've been in years. The only question is whether we have the will to achieve them. I urge my colleagues, both Republicans and Democrats, to come together. To rise to the enormous challenges we confront and forge a deal that not only restores the vitality and solvency of our economy for ourselves, but for generations to come.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion before us. While I embrace the principles of cut, cap and balance, the motion does not go far enough in fundamentally restructuring the way Washington spends taxpayer dollars. The principles found in this bill are a step in the right direction toward the fundamental restructuring we need in the way Washington spends taxpayer dollars.

Along with cutting spending, putting in place enforceable spending caps that put us on a path to balance and passing a balanced budget amendment, we must also repeal and defund Obamacare.

We must remember that Obamacare is the largest spending and entitlement program in our nation's history. That means, at a time when we can least afford it, President Obama added to our spending problem by the trillions. Without its repeal, we cannot have real economic reform.

At a time of trillion-and-a-half-dollar deficits and 9.2 percent unemployment—it was jaw-dropping to hear the President say this past Friday that we need only "modest adjustments" to fix our economy, and to suggest that 80% of the American people want a balanced approach, meaning tax increases, to solve our debt problems.

President Obama also said "we don't need a constitutional amendment to do our jobs." But we have the problems we do because Washington hasn't been doing its job. And a Balanced Budget Amendment would have kept President Obama from adding more than 4 trillion to our national debt.

The current negotiations over the debt ceiling illustrate exactly what is wrong with Washington.

We should not continue to spend and borrow trillions that we don't have just because that's always the way politicians have done things in the past. Those days are over.

The American people have had enough.

The President needs to stop scaring our military and stop threatening default. Last

Wednesday, I co-authored a bill that would remove default as an option and guarantee that our military was paid first. We can meet our obligations, keep our bond rating and keep our promises, but we have to make the tough choices now to turn our economy around and put Americans back to work.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap and Balance Act, which is common-sense legislation that will bring our fiscal house back in order, and will finally get our government off its spending binge.

We can no longer operate on a business as usual mentality, and the time to rein in our deficit spending is now. Families sit down and make budgets—then they spend within their means. It is imperative, now more than ever, that Congress abide by those same principles. Instead of applying for new credit cards, we need to cut up the ones we already have. I have long argued that our spending practices in Washington are unsustainable, and have routinely voted against spending measures in Democratic and Republican-led Congresses that have contributed to the crisis we face today.

Since Republicans retook control of the House in January, we have changed the discussion in Washington from how much more are we going to spend, to how much are we going to cut. There are some who feel that our problem is not our spending; rather, it is we are not bringing in enough revenue. I find this thought process misguided. It is not viable to increase taxes drastically enough to bridge the \$1.58 trillion gap between our spending and revenues, without destroying jobs and damaging our already struggling economy.

The Cut, Cap and Balance Act is a plan to bring long-term change to the Washington spending machine. First, this legislation would cut spending by \$111 billion in fiscal year 2012, reducing non-defense discretionary spending below 2008 levels, which was called for in the House-passed budget plan. Second, this legislation would place a cap on total spending as a share of GDP. Without caps on spending, future Congresses will ultimately resort back to the spending practices that have led to the situation we are currently facing. Third, this legislation will only provide for an increase in the debt limit if Congress sends a Balanced Budget Constitutional Amendment to the states for ratification. A Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution would legally force our government to live within its means. It's interesting to see that while many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, including our President, have argued that a constitutional amendment is not necessary, 49 states currently abide by some form of a balanced budget requirement.

We cannot pass the financial burdens of our country on to our children and grandchildren. It is important to note, that while I am not proud of the spending habits of Republicans when we were in charge, the unprecedented spending increase since 2009 when President Obama took office needs to be noted. Under his leadership, our national debt has increased by \$3.7 trillion. Once again, that is \$3.7 trillion in only two and a half years. It took the U.S. from 1776 until 1992 to accumulate the same amount of debt that President Obama accumulated in two and a half years.

Given our fiscal challenges that lay ahead, the time to act is now. The Cut, Cap, and Bal-

ance Act is an important step to bring fiscal sanity back to Washington. We can no longer continue to kick the can down the road hoping that someone else will make the tough choices. I strongly support passage of this important legislation, and urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, America is in crisis mode today. We are up against a deadline to increase our nation's \$14.3 trillion debt limit to meet its financial obligations.

There was initial hope some weeks ago that with the president finally leading the talks with Republican and Democratic leaders in the House and Senate, we would see a plan to reverse the spending spiral. But we've been waiting and waiting and watching and watching for that puff of white smoke to come over the White House to signal to the American people that their government leaders have come together and agreed on a plan and disaster has been averted. Regrettably, we still wait as the debt clock ticks toward the nation's default.

What has been so frustrating to me to watch over the past months is that everyone knows that our country is awash in red ink, everyone knows that our country is spending and borrowing too much, everyone knows that entitlement spending is unsustainable, everyone knows that job creation is stagnant with unemployment today hovering around 9 percent. I've been sounding this alarm for five years.

Everyone knows all this and yet here we are today without the president, who has been leading the debt negotiations, putting pen to paper on a plan for all to see. But the House today is saying to the American people that we can't continue to sit around and wait as our debt grows and the risk of national decline and a downgrading of our nation's credit rating become visible over the horizon.

The House today has a plan before it. The majority Republicans are offering the Cut, Cap and Balance plan. It reduces spending now, caps future spending and says we must balance our budget. Is it a perfect plan? No. I don't agree with all the numbers and the priorities. There are changes I would make and different policies I would include.

But we are at the point today that we cannot allow the perfect to become the enemy of the good. We have to lay down a marker, move the process forward and continue to work for a balanced plan to put America on a path to financial responsibility.

As we listen to some call for a plan that includes more "revenue," I want to be clear that I don't support raising taxes on American families. I believe any responsible plan must take a look at reforming and simplifying the tax code to allow hard-working Americans to keep more of their own money and to spur individual savings and small business job creation.

A balanced plan also must look at the reasons that have allowed the ethanol industry to become one of the most subsidized industries in the United States and other businesses to flourish because of direct spending through earmarks in the tax code. We must also look at certain tax earmarks and expenditures on the books which allow entities, such as General Electric, to not only owe no federal taxes, but to also claim a multimillion dollar tax benefit.

I also believe a balanced plan must include a mechanism to force Congress and the president to live within our nation's means. That's

why I have long supported a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

As I mentioned earlier, I have been trying to get the attention of Congress and past and present administrations on the debt crisis facing our country. My message has been simple: If America continues on its debt and deficit track, we edge closer and closer to the financial cliff and cede our standing as the world's leading nation.

I have called for a bipartisan solution that puts all options on the table and fully addresses ways to reverse our current deficit spending track and also our nation's unfunded obligations, which are the real drivers of our debt. This includes all entitlements—Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—and other mandatory spending, defense spending, discretionary spending, and tax policy, namely the closing of tax loopholes and tax earmarks.

The Bowles-Simpson commission offered a plan with everything on the table, and I was anxious to have the chance to vote on it, but the president, as did the Congress, walked away from the report last December of the very group he created. I was pleased to see the "Gang of Six" senators pick up the broad outlines of Bowles-Simpson and continue to work together this year on a comprehensive deficit reduction plan. The news earlier today that the Gang of Six has offered a path forward and that a large group of senators from both sides of the aisle is reacting positively to the plan is very encouraging.

I do not want the United States to default from a failure to raise the debt limit. The full faith and credit of the United States is on the line. Without an agreement, the cost to every American to borrow will rise, from home loans to car loans to student loans; the checks the Treasury writes will pick winners and losers.

It is precisely because the stakes are so high that I vote today for H.R. 2560 with the fervent hope that it will force the president and the House and Senate to come together and embrace a realistic and balanced deficit and debt reduction plan like the one recommended by Bowles-Simpson and the Gang of Six that puts our nation on sound financial footing for not only today, but for our children and grandchildren's generations.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this ridiculous legislation quickly cobbled together by House Republicans to appease their Tea Party fringe. The so-called "Cut, Cap and Balance" Act (H.R. 2560) is a dangerous political stunt that pushes our Nation right up to the edge of default.

With this bill—better called the Slash, Burn and Pander Act—House Republicans are taking our country to the brink of insolvency and financial devastation to make absolutely sure that rich people in America keep their tax breaks, that big oil and gas companies continue to receive their corporate welfare, and that the pharmaceutical industry be spared from contributing to our economic recovery.

The first title of the bill would immediately slash federal spending at such massive levels as to endanger our government's ability to perform basic functions. If enacted, it would likely prevent the government from sending out Social Security checks to seniors, from providing unemployment insurance benefits during our ongoing economic crisis, from conducting NIH research to find cures for deadly diseases, and from ensuring our food is safe to eat.

The second title would enforce arbitrary and extreme annual federal government spending limits. The bill pays lip service to protecting Medicare and Social Security in the near term—because even right-wingers understand the importance of these programs to the American people. However, there is no mathematical way that the federal government could meet these draconian limits without putting Medicare and Social Security on the chopping block.

The third title would prohibit the debt ceiling from being raised until Congress sends a Balanced Budget Amendment to the States for ratification—all before the August 2nd deadline when we begin to default. This Amendment to the Constitution would require even more restrictive spending limits over time. Importantly, it would also mandate a two-thirds vote in both the House and Senate—a nearly impossible hurdle—to ever close corporate tax loopholes or enact tax increases.

With their Slash, Burn and Pander Act, House Republicans are saying to the American public that the federal government will no longer provide the services and programs they value. At the same time, Republicans would make special interest tax breaks permanent by requiring a super-majority to change existing law.

What's most stunning about this debate is that everyone knows this bill has no chance of becoming law. In just two weeks, the United States will start defaulting on its obligations. The House's actions today waste precious time and take us further away from a solution. President Obama already put a deficit deal on the table that goes beyond what many Democrats and I are comfortable with. House Republicans rejected him out-of-hand and, instead, have offered the radical legislation before us today.

The fact that this inane piece of legislation is on the floor highlights the difference between governing and campaigning—and makes clear that many on the Republican side of the aisle remain unable to make that distinction.

I urge my colleagues to join my in voting "no" on the Slash, Burn and Pander Act.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I don't think that there is a Member here who doesn't believe that America is in poor fiscal health. But the question facing us is this: do we value fiscal responsibility enough to make hard choices, give up some of what we want, and come to the compromise that our form of government demands? Or do we see the possibility of a fiscal crisis as nothing more than a chance to advance our ideological ends? What matters more to us—restoring America's health, or gratifying our party's ideology? We cannot have both.

It's clear that the first, responsible approach is typified by President Obama, who has offered a compromise plan to reduce our long-term deficit by \$4 trillion, even as it gives up spending that Democrats value highly. It's also clear that the reckless, ideological approach is typified by the Republicans who have thus far rejected that compromise because it does not conform to 100 percent of their demands.

It's also typified by this radical plan to cut, cap, and end Medicare. This bill, under the guise of responding to a fiscal emergency that they themselves helped create, would write Republicans' most extreme and unpopular priorities into law. It would impose cuts even

more extreme than those in this spring's Republican budget, which would have ended Medicare. A vote for this bill would not only be another vote to end Medicare—it would be a vote to dramatically slash programs for the most vulnerable Americans, programs like Medicaid and Social Security. Republicans would break the Medicare guarantee—but they are adamantly opposed to asking the best-off among us to contribute their fair share. Nor would they ask for cuts in defense spending.

In fact, this bill would actually make a job-destroying default on our debt more likely. In order to pay our bills, Republicans would require us to pass a Constitutional amendment that would permanently enshrine their partisan budget priorities in law and make it virtually impossible to raise revenue. It is nothing more than a ransom demand—and the beneficiaries of that ransom demand are the most privileged Americans, who are asked to sacrifice nothing even as ordinary Americans are asked to sacrifice their futures, their security, and their health.

When even three-quarters of Republicans said in a poll last week that they want a balanced deficit solution, it is clear that this bill is targeted at the extreme fringe in American politics, a small minority of the far right. I urge my colleagues to affirm that this House represents all Americans—and to vote down this bill.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following exchange of letters:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET,
Washington, DC, July 19, 2011.

Hon. DAVE CAMP,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CAMP: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act of 2011, which is expected to be considered on the floor this week. The Committee on Ways and Means makes a valid point that certain provisions in this legislation are in your Committee's jurisdiction. I appreciate your decision to facilitate prompt consideration of the bill by the full House. I understand that by foregoing a sequential referral, the Committee on Ways and Means is not waiving its jurisdiction.

Per your request, I will include a copy of our exchange of letters with respect to H.R. 2560 in the Congressional Record during House consideration of this bill. We appreciate your cooperation and look forward to working with you as this bill moves through the Congress.

Sincerely,

PAUL RYAN,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, July 18, 2011.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN RYAN: I am writing concerning H.R. 2560, the "Cut, Cap, and Balance Act of 2011" which is expected to be scheduled for floor consideration this week.

As you know, the Committee on Ways and Means has jurisdiction over the bonded debt of the United States. Title III of this bill amends Title 31 of the United States Code by changing the amount of debt subject to the statutory limit. In order to expedite H.R. 2560 for floor consideration, the Committee will forgo action on the bill. This is being done with the understanding that it does not in any way prejudice the Committee with respect to the appointment of conferees or its

jurisdictional prerogatives on this or similar legislation.

I would appreciate your response to this letter, confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 2560, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration.

Sincerely,

DAVE CAMP,
Chairman.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2560, "The Cut, Cap and Balance Act" of 2011.

This legislation would cut total spending by \$111 billion in FY 2012 and would institute hard spending caps over the next ten years. The bill would provide for the president's request for a debt ceiling increase if and only if a Balanced Budget Amendment passes Congress and is sent to the states for ratification.

Today, we find ourselves on the precipice of a national economic calamity.

I am NOT speaking about the current debate over the debt ceiling, which is indeed very serious.

America pays its bills and default would be irresponsible!

But rather, I am referring to an unsustainable national debt—fueled by out-of-control spending and its damaging partner, rising taxes—that threatens to overwhelm our entire economy. We are truly on the verge of becoming "Athens on the Potomac."

Even if we were not facing a debt ceiling question, I would urge that we enact steep and immediate federal spending cuts, as the Committee on Appropriations is doing.

These reductions must be implemented now because the 'promise' of cuts five or eight or 10 years from now means very little without a way to enforce them.

The only way to truly guarantee spending cuts from future Presidents and future members of Congress is to make sure that the Constitution requires it.

We've tried lower spending targets before.

We've attempted to use deficit reduction goals.

We've enacted "across-the-board" spending cuts.

We've impounded federal dollars.

We've even sequestered funding to force deficit reduction.

The fact of the matter is that none of them worked.

A \$14.3 trillion national debate stands as an appalling monument to Washington's extravagance.

Congress and the President always find another waiver, another loophole, another procedural escape clause to get around what common-sense tells us has to be done: we must be made to live within our means.

Because we cannot continue to spend money we do not have, we are here today to cut spending immediately, set enforceable future caps on spending and send to the states for ratification a balanced budget amendment to our Constitution.

My Colleagues, the preamble to that Constitution states that we are to "promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our posterity . . ."

As I said earlier, we stand at a financial precipice. Our current federal fiscal policies are unsustainable for us and for our posterity—our children and their children.

The legislation before us would return us to the spirit and the letter of the Constitution's Preamble.

In closing Mr. Chairman, we find ourselves in a debt crisis not because the debt ceiling is too low, but because federal government spending is too high!

H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap and Balance Act is a Constitutional, permanent solution which will put an end to the spending-driven debt spiral and rescue our children and grandchildren from a future of bankruptcy and limited opportunity.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2560, the Republican "Cut, Cap, and Balance Act," which is before us today. I am sorry that the House of Representatives has to spend any time on this deeply flawed piece of legislation instead of dealing with the host of serious issues facing our Nation.

I have limited time, so I am not going to try today to cover all of the significant problems inherent in H.R. 2560; I know that there are other Members who plan to address many of the issues I care about, such as the central truth that this bill would end the Medicare guarantee. That in itself is reason enough to oppose H.R. 2560, but I also want to highlight the devastating impact this bill would have on our Nation's competitiveness, our ability to innovate, and our ability to create the jobs of the future.

As written, the legislation before us today would cut non-security discretionary spending for FY 2012 by \$76 billion. That translates into a 25 percent cut in budget authority next year with similar draconian cuts in the years that follow. What will be the impact of cuts of that magnitude? They will be profound and will inflict long-term damage to our Nation's well-being. Let me give just a few examples.

First, let's consider the impact of such a cut on the programs that help to predict severe weather, something that has been a particular concern in many parts of the Nation this year. With these cuts, Mr. Speaker, we would essentially be guaranteeing a diminished national capability for weather forecast and prediction, especially of severe weather events. Why? Because a 25 percent cut to our polar and geostationary weather satellite programs will delay NOAA's ability to procure follow-on weather satellites that provide the weather data needed 7 days a week, 24 hours a day to make accurate long-term weather forecasts.

What will happen? Well, for one thing, we won't get 10-day weather forecasts; the best we'll get with good accuracy are 48-hour weather predictions. Farmers, emergency management officials, military planners, fisherman, coastal residents and marine transportation capabilities, the tourism industry, and all Americans and other American businesses will be operating with weather predictions that are severely diminished in accuracy. When it comes to extreme weather events such as those that we've been experiencing across the Nation, diminished weather forecasting directly increases the risk of loss of lives and property, not to mention the widespread economic losses that come from our inability to prepare for such extreme events.

Mr. Speaker, why would Congress want to "go blind" to severe weather and put our people and our economic infrastructure at risk, especially when our economic recovery is so fragile and Americans are struggling daily to make ends meet?

Turning now to NSF, while it's difficult to quantify the devastating impacts of a 25 per-

cent cut to the NSF budget, we can roughly estimate that such a cut would lead to the reduction of over 17,000 research grants: about 16,500 funded by the various Research Directorates, and 750 funded by the Education and Human Resources Directorate.

We cannot predict where the next scientific breakthroughs will come from, or which research grant will lead to the next Google or GPS. So not only will these budget cuts affect over 200,000 people supported by NSF, including graduate students, undergraduates, K-12 teachers, and K-12 students, but these cuts will most certainly significantly harm our nation's ability to innovate, create jobs, and compete in the global economy.

With these kinds of budget cuts, we will be supporting less cutting-edge research and building fewer critically important scientific research user facilities, but perhaps the biggest problem is the loss of human capital. China and Europe are increasing funding for research and building world class research facilities while we are heading in the opposite direction. Those countries are successfully recruiting our best and brightest as we successfully recruited theirs for many decades.

Such steep cuts to the National Science Foundation will cause vital investments in sustainability, leading edge technology, and STEM education to be greatly delayed, reduced, or altogether cancelled. These investments include support for: NSF-wide emphasis on Science, Engineering, and Education for Sustainability, including vital investments in clean energy research; major investments critical to job creation and competitiveness, such as advanced manufacturing and the National Robotics Initiative; pathbreaking efforts to improve pre-college and undergraduate education, including the Teacher Learning for the Future program and new investments to transform undergraduate science courses.

A budget cut of even 5 percent to NSF's Major Research Equipment and Facilities and Construction account would result in the termination of approximately \$100 million in contracts to industry for work in progress on major facilities for environmental and oceanographic research. This would directly lead to layoffs of roughly 100 direct scientific and technical staff, with larger impacts at supplier companies. In addition, costs over the life of these projects would increase by over \$100 million because of delays in the construction schedule. Again, this is the potential scenario with a 5 percent cut—not the 25 percent cut to discretionary authorizations included in the bill before us today.

The National Science Foundation is the premier STEM education research organization in the country. For decades, NSF has been a leader in improving our collective understanding of how students learn, and how we can develop the most effective and inspiring curriculum and train the most effective and inspiring teachers. The education research being funded at NSF is critical to helping us to better understand what works and what doesn't, so that we can invest in programs that will really make a difference in our schools. Cuts to STEM education at NSF not only will directly impact many students and teachers across the country, but it will greatly limit our ability to improve the state of education in this country for every student and every teacher.

We cannot afford to make cuts to STEM education at a time when other countries are consistently outperforming us on international tests. For example, in the 2009 PISA, American schoolchildren ranked 17th out of 34 OECD countries in science. Shanghai-China, Finland, Hong Kong-China, and Singapore were the highest performers in the science assessment. Furthermore, American schoolchildren ranked 25th out of 34 OECD countries for math. Shanghai-China, Singapore, and Hong Kong-China ranked first, second and third in math, respectively. This is simply not the time for us to be cutting funding for critical STEM education programs at the NSF.

Mr. Speaker, the bad news in this bill does not end there. The impact on NASA is equally grim. For example, a 25 percent reduction to NASA's Space Operations account is over \$1 billion. This cut could cause NASA to reduce the number of cargo and crew transportation flights to the International Space Station, thereby jeopardizing its agreement with ISS partners to have 6 crew members operate the \$100 billion research facility. Delaying contracted for cargo and crew flights from commercial partners and Russia may have financial repercussions. It could render NASA unable to fulfill its agreed-to pension liability payments to shuttle workers and it could jeopardize our ability to receive data from on-going deep space missions by not having the money needed to replace critical components in its unreliable and outdated communications network.

A 25 percent reduction to NASA's Exploration account would cut almost a billion dollars, further delaying the development of the Space Launch System and Multipurpose Crew Vehicle—NASA's follow-on human space transportation and exploration vehicles—causing an even greater gap in the ability of a U.S. government-operated human transportation system to access space whenever needed, as well as causing disruption to on-going contracts, possibly requiring extensive layoffs and financial compensation due to terminated contracts and further destabilizing the aerospace industrial base.

A 25 percent reduction to NASA's Aeronautics Research account is over \$142 million. This will force cuts to NASA's critically important research in aviation safety and airspace systems and delay work needed by the FAA to increase the capacity and efficiency of the nation's air transportation system through NextGen modernization. In addition, it will prevent NASA from conducting unique research required to develop environmentally responsible aircraft.

NASA's science programs would also suffer deep cuts, an outcome that will be doing long-term damage to an area in which the United States has maintained unquestioned leadership. It is doing the challenging R&D projects that keep our companies and workforce at the top of their game—whether it's landing spacecraft on Mars, acquiring data to understand the complex behavior of our own planet, or carrying out the analysis of data collected from space. Cutting NASA's science programs by 25 percent will severely harm our ability to carry out pathbreaking research, such as investigating dark energy, which may lead to revolutionary breakthroughs in our understanding of our Universe. It will also draw the best and brightest who seek inspirational and challenging projects.

A cut of this magnitude would not only preclude new projects, such as those recommended in National Academies decadal surveys, but could even jeopardize missions being readied for launch in FY 2012, such as the Mars Science Laboratory, the NPP weather satellite, and the Radiation Belt Storm Probe, a mission that will help us understand the impact of the radiation belt environment on spacecraft, something with important practical significance.

Mr. Speaker, I don't want to sit on the sidelines while other nations are the first to announce major scientific discoveries, draw the world's top science and engineering talent into their fold, and begin to assume leadership in areas where the U.S. has always been on the cutting-edge.

NASA's education programs would also suffer if this bill ever becomes law. Mr. Speaker, we tell the youth of this nation to reach for the stars, and NASA is truly one of the agencies that inspire our next generation to dream big and pursue the disciplines that we know are needed to keep our nation strong—science and engineering. However, under this bill, a 25 percent cut to NASA's education programs would cripple initiatives such as the Space Grant and EPSCoR (Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research) programs, minority education projects such as the Minority Undergraduate Research and Education Project (MUREP), and K-12 teacher training and student opportunities that are so critical to building and stimulating our future capabilities.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, a 25 percent reduction to NASA's Cross Agency Support account would have serious implications for NASA's safety and mission success, NASA's information technology activities, and our ability to operate NASA Centers across the U.S. I'd hate to think what a cut to NASA's safety and mission success activities would mean for ensuring the safety of our nation's astronauts launched into space and the success of the critical functions they and our robotic spacecraft perform. At a time when cybersecurity is being discussed as a key issue across federal agencies, this cut would reduce NASA's critical information technology functions, including information security. It is highly likely that a cut to the agency operations budgets included in this account could require NASA to shut down NASA Centers, lay off additional contractors, and take actions that would have negative repercussions throughout communities and regions at a time when local economies are already stressed and jobs are hard to come by.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that my remarks give Members and the American public some idea of the harm that enactment of this short-sighted piece of legislation would do, not only to the agencies listed, but also to other important R&D initiatives at the Department of Energy, the National Institutes of Standards and Technology, and NOAA, to name but a few of the affected agencies.

At the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, this bill is not going to become law. It is simply a diversion from the serious business on which this body should be focusing its attention. However, it is not a harmless diversion. The extreme and ill-considered cuts that would flow from its enactment send a terrible message to our citizens about this House's priorities. When your car is low on gas, you don't siphon more out of the tank, yet that is what this bill would do to the nation's R&D and in-

novation capabilities. I want the record to be clear that I do not support the cuts in this bill, nor do I support the process under which this bill has come to the House floor. We can—and should—do better. This bill is short-sighted; its negative impacts would cost more in the long-term than any immediate budget reductions would save in the short-term. I urge my colleagues in Congress to vote NO on this bill.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Republican plan to end Medicare and the health care safety net.

Republicans are playing a dangerous game of chicken. They are threatening to hold the global economy hostage unless President Obama and the Senate agree to their demands to slash Medicare and Medicaid.

We must reject this assault on seniors, the disabled, and children.

Previous amendments to the Constitution have ended slavery and guaranteed the rights of citizens of all races to equal treatment under the law. They have guaranteed the freedoms of speech and religion, and for protection from unwarranted government intrusions on personal rights.

What great principle do Republicans seek to enshrine into the Constitution today?

The principle that the rich should never pay more taxes;

That Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security are too expensive for our Nation to afford;

And the U.S. Congress should be stripped of its ability to increase spending to protect our economy from recession.

Republicans say that they are protecting Medicare for the future—don't buy it. That's what they told us about their budget plan. It wasn't true then, and it isn't true now.

Republicans tried to end Medicare as we know it in the budget they passed in April. Public outrage stalled their plans. So today they have a new approach: Pass a constitutional amendment that that would make it impossible for Congress to continue to fund Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

Their objective is to end Medicare as we know it, repealing its guarantees of coverage for hospital care, chemotherapy, doctor's visits, and prescription drugs. In its place they would create a voucher system—and yes, it is a voucher. Seniors would be forced into the private market to buy health insurance with only limited financial support from the government.

This plan will increase premiums and cost sharing by \$6,000 per person. And they want to write it into the Constitution!

And they want to destroy Medicaid too. Republicans would cut Medicaid in half by 2022, leaving tens of millions of people without access to care. People in nursing homes would be cut off. They would also slash support for the Children's Health Insurance Program, jeopardizing access to care for 8 million kids.

Medicaid is the primary payer for long-term care and the home and community-based services that help people stay out of nursing homes. Who will now bear the \$72,000 per year cost of a nursing home for an 85-year old grandmother who collects \$10,000 a year in Social Security benefits? Her children will try, but only the rich will be able to afford the costs in today's economy.

This is a complete abdication of our commitment to providing care with dignity for our seniors.

The Republican proposal has other deplorable consequences. It would make it impossible to invest in biomedical research to find tomorrow's cures and technologies for cancer, Alzheimer's, and heart disease. It would effectively foreclose the possibility that Congress could address climate change by putting a price on carbon emissions. It would cripple the FDA, threatening the safety of our pharmaceuticals and our food.

This is an extreme and dangerous proposal. Instead of holding our seniors hostage, we need to work together to pass a realistic compromise that will ensure we honor our debt while lowering our deficit.

I urge a no vote on this legislation.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the nation's financial future should be serious business. Unfortunately, House Republicans are not treating it that way. It's bad enough that too many of them are willing to court financial disaster by hijacking the process of raising the debt ceiling. Today's vote is perhaps the clearest illustration of their cavalier approach.

The vote on the so-called Cut, Cap, and Balance bill comes without legislative work in any substantive committee. As a member of both the Budget and Ways and Means Committees, I would have welcomed hearings and work sessions which would have shown this bill to be a travesty. Not a single president in 50 years proposed any budget that would have met their requirements that spending be limited to 18 percent of GDP. Ronald Reagan never proposed a budget under 21 percent.

House Republicans would mandate a balanced budget every year, whether we were at war or dealing with the fallout of a tragic natural disaster or an economic meltdown. Cuts to Medicare, the social safety net and student loans would still be possible with a single majority vote, and yet eliminating tax breaks for the favored and the wealthiest individuals or corporations would require a two-thirds supermajority. Since House Republicans want to continue to protect some areas of spending and give more tax breaks to people who don't need them, this means even more draconian cuts to the programs that people depend on the most.

The House Republican approach is not about controlling the national debt. The Republican budget still increases the debt ceiling almost \$9 trillion. Yet their proposal would require three-fifths supermajority to raise the debt ceiling in the future. This bizarre legislation would freeze into Federal law and the Constitution the same dysfunctional mechanics which made the State of California the fiscal basket case that it is today.

Fortunately, this wacky and irresponsible measure will not be enacted by this Congress; even if Congress were to pass it, the President would veto it. The legislation does put the spotlight on the risks to the country's financial future if voters reward this behavior. The only good that may come of the charade is that it might provide cover for a deal averting the damage from the debt ceiling gamesmanship.

Everyone knows we must honor our debts. Perhaps this foolishness will permit Republican leadership to walk themselves and their members off the ledge and not punish American families. I strongly oppose this cynical, ill-advised proposal.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to strongly oppose the Republican's "Cut, Cap, and Balance Act." The only thing balanced

about this bill is that it has the word balance in the title. The actual title should be "Cut, Default, and End Medicare Act" since it would have a devastating effect on all American families and businesses. This legislation makes significant cuts to social programs, and caps spending at unprecedented levels.

Quite simply, this is the worst piece of legislation I have seen while serving in Congress. This legislation seals tax breaks for richest Americans, while gutting Medicare for seniors and other critical programs for students, such as Pell Grants. In order to eliminate tax breaks for the richest two percent of Americans, a supermajority of Congress would be required for approval. This bill will adversely impact the Hispanic community and will substantially weaken the American economy.

The Republican plan is not the balanced approach Americans favor: spending cuts and revenue increases, but instead the Tea Party plan will lock in cuts over the next 10 years as severe as those in the Ryan budget plan that they passed in April. In fact, according to a CBS News Poll released Monday, 66 percent of Americans say an agreement to raise the amount of money the nation can borrow should include both spending cuts and tax increases. This bill would exacerbate the debt crisis by making it more difficult for the U.S. to pay its bills by August 2nd and force the passage of a constitutional amendment that would require a two-thirds approval to raise any revenue in the future.

This bill would require slashing \$111 billion immediately from critical programs, in FY2012, without regard to the 9.2 percent unemployment rate. These cuts would cause the loss of roughly 700,000 jobs in the current weak economy. In fact, the Republicans' slash and burn politics have not created a single job for hardworking middle class families in over the 200 days they have controlled the House. Instead of rebuilding our economic infrastructure by investing in roads, ports, bridges, and education and job training programs to help middle class Americans, they push a radical and dangerous ideological agenda.

H.R. 2560 also continues the Republicans assault on our nation's seniors. Their plan will inevitably result in the end of the Medicare guarantee, shifting thousands of dollars of health costs onto seniors, shredding the social safety net and our promise to protect our most vulnerable. Social Security would also be affected, even though Social Security doesn't add 1 penny to the deficit.

Rather than focusing on innovation, infrastructure, education, and jobs, Republicans want to manipulate the Constitution to make it easier to cut Medicare and Social Security than to close special interest tax loopholes.

The bill destroys Social Security and Medicare as we know them. These programs are extremely important to seniors, especially to those in my district. H.R. 2560 is nothing more than an ideological piece of legislation to pursue a radical policy agenda of attacking the livelihood of our seniors, while protecting tax breaks for special interests and the wealthiest Americans. For these reasons, I strongly urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation and stand firm in support of our seniors, children, and most vulnerable.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, "The Cut, Cap, and Balance Act" shows yet again how out of step the Majority is with the needs and concerns of ordinary Americans. With over 9

percent unemployment, Congress should focus on growing the economy, lowering unemployment and reducing our deficit.

We can achieve this economic growth through a fiscal policy that invests in our future, creates broad based economic growth and shares the burden of debt reduction. Instead, we are debating an ideologically extreme policy that makes the Majority's budget's treatment of seniors, the middle class and our children look balanced.

This bill caps spending at 18 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), a level not seen since 1966, when seniors made up 9 percent of the population, not the 13 percent they make up today. In 1966, the average cost of medical care was \$1,500 a year, not the \$8,200 that it is today, and almost no Americans were enrolled in Medicare, whereas over 46 million seniors are enrolled today.

Even more disturbing, the bill holds an increase in the debt ceiling hostage to the passage of a so-called "Balanced Budget Amendment." This Balanced Budget Amendment is more radical than those that have been considered by Congress in the past. Unbelievably, it would require a supermajority in both houses of Congress to raise revenues.

However, you would only need a simple majority to cut taxes on the wealthy and multinational corporations and slash government programs that our most vulnerable citizens rely on. What type of priorities do we have when we change the Constitution to make it easier to cut Medicare and Social Security, and nearly impossible to end the tax breaks for special interests groups like the oil industry?

We are at a place in our history where the concentration of wealth at the very top has only been matched at the time immediately prior to the Great Depression. This bill will not only continue this trend, but it will act as a catalyst where the people who already have so much, will be given so much more.

And if one thinks that the Balanced Budget Amendment is sound fiscal policy, they would be sorely mistaken. One only has to look at many of the states who have Balanced Budget Amendments on the books to see what happens when you amend your Constitution to promote ideology and politics over common sense fiscal solutions.

The budget priorities enshrined in this legislation have been soundly rejected by the American people, who have also made it clear that they want Congress to come together and solve our fiscal problems and to stop political posturing. We need to be serious in our attempts to right our fiscal ship, but this Majority is asking our seniors, our children and our middle class workers to take on all the sacrifice while asking nothing of the wealthiest amongst us. I therefore urge my colleagues to reject this legislation.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2560, which should be called the Cut, Cap, and Default Act. This is not a serious attempt to deal with our debt or the looming threat that the United States could default on its obligations. If the concern of the supporters of this legislation was truly our national debt, they would not be working to pass a bill that would virtually guarantee default on our debt. This may provide some political cover for certain members, but it is not a serious response to the problems of our economy.

To raise the debt limit, this legislation requires two-thirds of both chambers of Congress to pass a balanced budget amendment

that games the system by making it far easier to slash federal programs like Medicare (with a simple majority vote) than to raise taxes on the wealthy or eliminate special interest loopholes (a higher than majority, two-thirds of members must agree). Unneeded tax breaks for oil companies or loopholes that benefit hedge fund managers would be protected, but Medicare, Social Security, unemployment insurance, and other programs that matter to the middle class and the most vulnerable members of our community would be on the chopping block. In addition to our social safety net programs, this bill would force cuts in programs ensuring public safety, investing in education and infrastructure, and protecting our environment.

Under this bill, multimillionaires could rest easy that they wouldn't lose the generous tax cuts they received under President George W. Bush. But poor seniors who need Medicaid to be able to get nursing home care would be out of luck. Pell Grants that enable middle and low income students to go to college would have to be cut. Nutrition programs for children and the elderly would be curtailed. Government efforts to protect clean air and water and to protect the wildlife, especially endangered species, would suffer.

It has long been the goal of some to "starve the beast," that is, to cut taxes to the level that government services they feel are unnecessary are eliminated. These "services" include Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, environmental regulation, and the U.S. Department of Education to name a few well-known targets.

I recognize the need to get our debt under control. But we are in the process of recovering from a devastating recession brought on by the policies of the very people calling for cuts in spending today. We have to raise the debt ceiling because we have less revenue due to the Bush tax cuts, billions spent on two wars, and critically needed efforts to pull our economy out of the nose dive it was in at the end of the Bush administration. Holding the full faith and credit of the United States hostage is not the answer to our problems. We need to come together and take the responsible action of raising the debt limit and then move on to addressing the most serious crises facing our nation: stimulating job growth and getting our economy moving again.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, only in Washington can someone charge \$14.3 trillion in debt, ask for a higher credit limit, and not propose a single solution about how to control their seemingly unrestrained spending. That is just what the current Administration has asked Congress to do and it is something which I joined 317 of my colleagues, Republican and Democrat, in saying "no!"

As every Alaskan family knows, there is no magic wand that will just waive debt away. Rather, debt must be managed, luxuries must be given up, and budgets must be made and adhered to. H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap and Balance Act of 2011 employs what should be a common-sense approach to controlling and paying down our bloated debt. By cutting today's spending and capping and indexing tomorrow's spending to our growth, we can begin to pay down the \$46,000 that each and every American owes.

To ensure that future generations do not make the same spending mistakes, H.R. 2560 will also encourage Congress to propose a

Balanced Budget Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. With this amendment we can begin to restrain growth of Washington bureaucrats whose sole job is to prevent resource development and make everyone's life more complicated and more difficult. By forcing future Congress to spend only what they take in revenue, we can finally create a government which lives within its means.

In the 112th Congress, I am a proud and original cosponsor of a balanced budget amendment and in previous Congresses I have voted for a balanced budget amendment five separate times. Since my first vote in favor of a Balanced Budget Amendment in 1982, I have supported the idea that Congress, like every American family, must make and stick to a budget. Alaskan families seem to understand this concept, it is time that Washington learned from their example.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2560.

This misguided legislation is a ridiculous gimmick that has been dismissed as such by budget and economic experts on both sides of the aisle.

It does nothing to pay our bills. It does nothing to create jobs and grow our economy. And it does nothing to address the rapidly approaching default crisis.

So what would it actually do?

It would destroy jobs and cause economic catastrophe. It protects tax breaks and loopholes for Big Oil and Wall Street by cutting the critical safety net programs seniors, children and American families depend on. And, it would double down on the draconian Ryan Budget, ending Medicare and more than doubling health care costs for seniors.

Rather than wasting yet more time debating a bill that won't pass the Senate and would be vetoed by the President, we should be doing the one thing guaranteed to reduce our deficit immediately—create jobs.

Yes, we must make tough choices to reduce spending and balance our budget. But these cuts must not endanger our economic future. We still need to invest in innovation, infrastructure and education to create the jobs today and in the future and to ensure a well-trained workforce to do those jobs.

Putting people to work and helping businesses grow increases revenue streams and decreases budget deficits. This is the most effective way to reduce the deficit and pay our bills while still protecting our economic future.

This bill, however, would do the opposite by balancing the budget on the backs of seniors, the middle income families and the most vulnerable among us.

Our deficit is a serious problem that requires serious solutions.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2560 is not a serious solution, and I urge my colleagues to oppose it.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, This "Cut, Cap and Gut" proposal isn't just a retreat of the policies our colleagues voted for in their extreme budget resolution that would end Medicare as we know it; it's worse. This bill holds an increase in the debt limit hostage to passage of a radical GOP Constitutional Amendment that would require even deeper cuts after ending Medicare as we know it.

It arbitrarily caps federal spending at 18 percent of GDP. To say this is unwise is an understatement. The last time federal spending was 18 percent or less of GDP was 1966. The problems of 2011 don't call for a rigid ideology

45 years behind the curve. Why would we tie Congress' hands in the event of future economic challenges? In economic downturns Congress should be able to cut taxes or increase investments to stimulate growth. This is basic economic policy.

This proposal turns a blind eye not just to basic economics, but to the two pressing and related challenges facing our country: growing the economy and charting a course back to fiscal balance. It would necessitate across the board cuts in the domestic programs—education, research, infrastructure and Medicare—that make us strong and ensure our economic success. We know that the best cure for a budget deficit is a growing economy, but this bill requires deep spending cuts starting in October that could stall the recovery and put more Americans out of work.

The budget surpluses we achieved during the 1990s were the result of a concerted effort to balance the budget through a comprehensive approach. Revenues, entitlements, military and domestic spending—all were on the table. We balanced the budget four years in a row. We paid off more than \$400 billion of the national debt. Yet those surpluses were squandered during the George W. Bush administration through trillions in tax cuts and two wars and a privatized prescription drug plan—none of it paid for. Then, when the recession hit in 2008, we were already deep in a fiscal hole and our ability to take effective countermeasures was dangerously compromised. We must never let that happen again.

The bill before us is the opposite of a balanced, comprehensive approach. This bill makes it easier for future Congresses to cut Medicare than to close tax loopholes for oil companies or millionaires, because it requires a 2/3 vote for any measure that raises revenue. The Ronald Reagan-Tip O'Neal agreement to save Social Security in 1983 would not have passed this hurdle. George H. W. Bush's bipartisan 1990 deficit reduction plan would not have passed this hurdle, nor would the Democratic deficit reduction plan of 1993. So this bill willfully cuts off Congress' access to the tools that have produced meaningful deficit reduction and boosted economic growth, at a time when our economy is fragile and millions of Americans are out of work.

Perhaps this is just positioning by the House majority, but there is no need for this brinksmanship. We should not be making these decisions under duress, but that is exactly where the Republican no-compromise majority has left us. They ask us to alter the fundamental relationship between our people and government—undermining Medicare, education, infrastructure and research funding—by voting on a bill that has never seen a committee vote and was only completed last Friday.

This legislation is not worthy of Congress' approval, and it deserves rejection from those on both sides of the aisle who understand that it is a dangerous diversion from the pressing tasks of job creation and sound fiscal policy.

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, in 1995, I was one of only 72 Democrats to vote for the balanced budget amendment, BBA, considered by the House, and I would vote for a straightforward BBA today. However, the bill before us, H.R. 2560, the Cut, Cap and Balance Act, does not meet this standard.

H.R. 2560 would ensure massive cuts to Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid by

holding government spending to 18 percent of Gross Domestic Product—which has not happened since 1966. In addition, the defense budget is exempted from any cuts under this plan. The only way to achieve a balanced budget would be to dismantle programs that help seniors and the disabled, while tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans and corporations that ship jobs overseas are preserved. It is simply unacceptable to make seniors and the disabled bear such a large share of this burden, and this is why AARP and many other groups oppose H.R. 2560.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is a Republican gimmick, not a serious attempt to find common ground and a reasonable approach to getting our deficit and debt under control, and I will oppose it.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 355, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. I am in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Bishop of Georgia moves that the bill be recommitted to the Committee on Rules with instructions to report the following amendment back to the House forthwith:

At the end of section 301, add the following new subsection:

(c) PROTECTING OUR VETERANS.—It shall not be in order in the House of Representatives or the Senate to consider any balanced budget amendment to the Constitution that could result in a reduction in veterans benefits.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, there are many times when we come to this floor and engage in heated debate, and we have heard some heated debate today. This so-called Cut, Cap, and Balance bill does just that.

It cuts and it caps programs that will work for everyone and put America ahead of our competitors. It cuts and caps our ability to jump-start new industries in our country, like clean energy. It cuts and caps our ability to rebuild our economic infrastructure, like roads and bridges and ports, and to put people to work. It cuts and caps education and job training opportunities to help middle class people get and keep good jobs.

Yes, it cuts and it caps, but it balances the cuts and the caps by pro-

tecting tax breaks for the wealthiest folks in our country by providing subsidies for corporations that take jobs overseas, away from American workers, and by cutting Medicare and Social Security benefits for our Nation's seniors—balancing it on the backs of them.

I have some problems with this bill, Mr. Speaker, but I am a realist, and I realize, reluctantly, that it might just pass. So, regardless of how we may feel about the underlying legislation, this motion to recommit is something upon which we ought to all be able to agree. It simply says that it shall not be in order in the House of Representatives or the Senate to consider any balanced budget amendment to the Constitution that could result in a reduction in veterans' benefits.

□ 1950

Mr. Speaker, we have already seen what a shortfall in veterans funding can do. I remember the problems with veterans care. I remember the \$1 billion shortfall a few years ago when the Department of Veterans Affairs had to raid its operations and maintenance account to help pay for veterans basic medical care.

Even now, veterans have to wait years to have their claims adjudicated because they're just are not enough adjudicators. They have to wait too long to get doctors to get their treatment. Mr. Speaker, with more of our servicemembers returning home every day, more vets are returning home who have no opportunity or a limited opportunity for job training, returning home with PTSD, or returning home now having to face the possibility of limited educational benefits because of this bill and its progeny.

Mr. Speaker, now is not the time to endanger benefits to our Nation's veterans.

When veterans come home without limbs because they have defended our freedoms, we should not put in place Cut, Cap, and Balance legislation on their backs, the backs that are strained and damaged by the injuries they sustained fighting for this country. We should not stand idly by and watch this Congress endanger the welfare of our Nation's heroes.

Today's Nation's military remains deployed overseas as it has during the last 9 years. The funding requirements we face in meeting the needs have significantly increased as we continue to meet and address the longstanding issues from past and current wars. And we cannot watch the requirements for these fighting men and women who come home continue to die.

These needs last long after the last American combatants depart Iraq and Afghanistan. This motion to recommit would simply protect our veterans from any potential unintended consequence resulting from this ill-conceived bill, the so-called Cut, Cap, and Balance Act.

The needs of America's veterans, past and future, should be one of our high-

est priorities. And this motion will ensure that our veterans are taken care of and they receive the benefits they have earned.

Let's be clear. The passage of this motion to recommit will not prevent the passage of the underlying bill. If the amendment is adopted, it will be incorporated into the bill and the bill will be immediately voted upon.

So though we may disagree on the bill, today we have the opportunity with this motion to recommit and my amendment to speak with one voice in support of our veterans.

It is up to all of us. I urge you to vote "yes" on this motion to recommit. But let's make sure that if this bill passes, the Cut, Cap and Balance and any balanced budget will not result in a reduction of veterans benefits. Vote "yes" on the motion to recommit and protect our Nation's veterans.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I rise in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I have fantastic news. All of the gentleman from Georgia's concerns have already been addressed in this legislation.

Let me simply refer you to section 317 where it says: "Exempt from direct spending limits, section (b)(3), veterans benefits and services, which is all of function 700." Let me refer you to section 318 that shows when it comes to sequester, which is basically an enforcement mechanism on spending caps, exemption, veterans benefits. Veterans benefits are explicitly preserved in this legislation just as they are with the budget that we had passed that this cap and cut conformed to.

So make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, there are no cuts to veterans in here, because we agree the men and women out there fighting on the front lines for our freedom have been given promises to benefits like health care and others, and those promises all are to be kept.

That is why we've already taken care of the gentleman's concerns so the recommit is unnecessary because we preserve the benefits explicitly.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on the passage of the bill, if ordered; and approval of the Journal.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 188, nays 236, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 605]

YEAS—188

Ackerman Green, Gene Pallone
 Altmire Grijalva Pascrell
 Andrews Gutierrez Pastor (AZ)
 Baca Hahn Payne
 Baldwin Hanabusa Pelosi
 Barrow Hastings (FL) Perlmutter
 Bass (CA) Heinrich Peters
 Becerra Higgins Peterson
 Berkley Himes Pingree (ME)
 Berman Hinojosa Polis
 Bishop (GA) Hirono Price (NC)
 Bishop (NY) Hochul Quigley
 Boren Holden Rahall
 Boswell Holt Rangel
 Brady (PA) Honda Reyes
 Braley (IA) Hoyer Richardson
 Brown (FL) Inslee Richmond
 Butterfield Israel Ross (AR)
 Capps Jackson (IL) Rothman (NJ)
 Cardoza Jackson Lee Roybal-Allard
 Carnahan (TX) Ruppersberger
 Carney Johnson (GA) Rush
 Carson (IN) Johnson, E. B. Ryan (OH)
 Chandler Jones Sanchez, Linda
 Chu Kaptur T.
 Cicilline Keating Sanchez, Loretta
 Clarke (MI) Kildee Sarbanes
 Clarke (NY) Kind Schakowsky
 Clay Kissell Schiff
 Cleaver Kucinich Schrader
 Clyburn Langevin Schwartz
 Cohen Larsen (WA) Scott (VA)
 Connolly (VA) Larson (CT) Scott, David
 Conyers Lee (CA) Serrano
 Cooper Levin Sewell
 Costa Lewis (GA) Sherman
 Costello Lipinski Shuler
 Courtney Loebsock Sires
 Critz Lofgren, Zoe Slaughter
 Crowley Lowey Smith (WA)
 Cuellar Lujan Speier
 Cummings Lynch Stark
 Davis (CA) Maloney Sutton
 Davis (IL) Markey Thompson (CA)
 DeFazio Matheson Thompson (MS)
 DeGette Matsui Tierney
 DeLauro McCarthy (NY) Tonko
 Deutch McCollum Towns
 Dicks McDermott Tsongas
 Dingell McGovern Van Hollen
 Doggett McIntyre Velázquez
 Donnelly (IN) McNerney Visclosky
 Doyle Meeks Walz (MN)
 Edwards Michaud Wasserman
 Engel Miller (NC) Schultz
 Eshoo Miller, George Waters
 Farr Moore Watt
 Fattah Moran Waxman
 Filner Murphy (CT) Welch
 Frank (MA) Nadler Wilson (FL)
 Fudge Napolitano Woolsey
 Garamendi Neal Wu
 Gonzalez Oliver Yarmuth
 Green, Al Owens

NAYS—236

Adams Burton (IN) Emerson
 Aderholt Calvert Farenthold
 Akin Camp Fincher
 Alexander Campbell Fitzpatrick
 Amash Canseco Flake
 Austria Cantor Fleischmann
 Bachmann Capito Fleming
 Bachus Carter Flores
 Barletta Cassidy Forbes
 Bartlett Chabot Fortenberry
 Barton (TX) Chaffetz Foxx
 Bass (NH) Coble Franks (AZ)
 Benishkek Coffman (CO) Frelinghuysen
 Berg Cole Gallegly
 Biggert Conaway Gardner
 Bilbray Cravaack Garrett
 Bilirakis Crawford Gerlach
 Bishop (UT) Crenshaw Gibbs
 Black Culberson Gibson
 Blackburn Davis (KY) Gingrey (GA)
 Bonner Denham Gohmert
 Bono Mack Dent Goodlatte
 Boustany DesJarlais Gosar
 Brady (TX) Diaz-Balart Gowdy
 Brooks Dold Granger
 Broun (GA) Dreier Graves (GA)
 Buchanan Duffy Graves (MO)
 Bucshon Duncan (SC) Griffin (AR)
 Buerkle Duncan (TN) Griffith (VA)
 Burgess Ellmers Grimm

Guinta McCarthy (CA) Rooney
 Guthrie McCaul Ros-Lehtinen
 Hall McClintock Roskam
 Hanna McCotter Ross (FL)
 Harper McHenry Royce
 Harris McKeon Runyan
 Hartzler McKinley Ryan (WI)
 Hastings (WA) McMorris Scalise
 Hayworth Rodgers Schilling
 Heck Meehan Schmidt
 Hensarling Mica Schock
 Herger Miller (FL) Schweikert
 Herrera Beutler Miller (MI) Scott (SC)
 Huelskamp Mulvaney Scott, Austin
 Huizenga (MI) Murphy (PA) Sensenbrenner
 Hultgren Myrick Sessions
 Hunter Neugebauer Shimkus
 Hurt Noem Simpson
 Issa Nugent Smith (NE)
 Jenkins Nunes Smith (NJ)
 Johnson (IL) Nunnlee Smith (TX)
 Johnson (OH) Olson Southerland
 Johnson, Sam Palazzo Stearns
 Jordan Paul Stivers
 Kelly Paulsen Stutzman
 King (IA) Pearce Sullivan
 King (NY) Pence Terry
 Kingston Petri Thompson (PA)
 Kinzinger (IL) Pitts Thornberry
 Kline Platts Tiberi
 Labrador Poe (TX) Tipton
 Lamborn Pompeo Turner
 Lance Pompey Upton
 Landry Posey Walberg
 Lankford Price (GA) Walden
 Latham Quayle Walsh (IL)
 LaTourette Reed Webster
 Latta Rehberg West
 Lewis (CA) Reichert Westmoreland
 LoBiondo Renacci Whitfield
 Long Ribble Wilson (SC)
 Lucas Rigell Wittman
 Luetkemeyer Rivera Wolf
 Lummis Roby Womack
 Lungren, Daniel E. Rogers (AL)
 Mack Rogers (KY)
 Manzullo Rogers (MI)
 Marchant Rohrabacher
 Marino Rokita Young (FL)
 Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—8

Blumenauer Ellison Shuster
 Capuano Giffords Young (AK)
 Castor (FL) Hinchey

□ 2017

Messrs. OLSON and GINGREY of Georgia changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mr. KEATING, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Messrs. THOMPSON of California and GEORGE MILLER of California changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 234, noes 190, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 606]

AYES—234

Adams Austria Bass (NH)
 Aderholt Bachus Benishkek
 Akin Barletta Berg
 Alexander Bartlett Biggert
 Amash Barton (TX) Bilbray

Bilirakis Bishop (UT) Hall
 Black Blackburn Hanna
 Blackburn Bonner Harper
 Bonner Hastings (WA) Harris
 Bono Mack Hayworth
 Boren Hayworth Heck
 Boustany Boushny Hensarling
 Brady (TX) Brooks Herger
 Buchanan Buchanan Herrera Beutler
 Bucshon Bucshon Huelskamp
 Buerkle Buerkle Huizenga (MI)
 Burgess Burgess Hultgren
 Burton (IN) Hunter Ribble
 Calvert Hurt Rigell
 Camp Issa Rivera
 Campbell Jenkins Roby
 Cantor Johnson (IL) Johnson (TN)
 Capito Johnson (OH) Rogers (AL)
 Carter Johnson, Sam Rogers (KY)
 Cassidy Jordan Rogers (MI)
 Chabot Kelly Rokita
 Chaffetz King (IA) Rooney
 Coble King (NY) Ros-Lehtinen
 Coffman (CO) Kingstong Roskam
 Cole Kinzinger (IL) Ross (FL)
 Conaway Kline Royce
 Cooper Labrador Runyan
 Cravaack Lamborn Ryan (WI)
 Crawford Lance Scalise
 Crenshaw Landry Schilling
 Culberson Lankford Schmidt
 Daisey Latham Schock
 Denham LaTourette Schweikert
 Dent Latta Scott (SC)
 Diaz-Balart Lewis (CA) Scott, Austin
 Dold LoBiondo Sensenbrenner
 Dreier Long Sessions
 Duffy Lucas Shimkus
 Duncan (SC) Luetkemeyer Shuler
 Duncan (TN) Lummis Shuster
 Ellmers Lungren, Daniel Simpson
 Emerson E. Smith (NE)
 Farenthold Manzullo Smith (NJ)
 Fincher Marchant Smith (TX)
 Fitzpatrick Marino Southerland
 Flake Matheson Stearns
 Fleischmann McCarthy (CA) Stivers
 Fleming McCaul Stutzman
 Flores McClintock Sullivan
 Forbes McCotter Terry
 Fortenberry McHenry Thompson (PA)
 Foxx McIntyre Thornberry
 Franks (AZ) McKeon Tiberi
 Frelinghuysen McKinley Tipton
 Gallegly McMorris Turner
 Gardner Rodgers Upton
 Garrett Meehan Walberg
 Gerlach Mica Walden
 Gibbs Miller (FL) Walsh (IL)
 Gibson Miller (MI) Webster
 Gingrey (GA) Miller, Gary West
 Gohmert Mulvaney Westmoreland
 Goodlatte Murphy (PA) Whitfield
 Gosar Myrick Wilson (SC)
 Gowdy Neugebauer Wittman
 Granger Noem Wolf
 Graves (GA) Nugent Womack
 Graves (MO) Nunes Woodall
 Griffin (AR) Nunnlee Yoder
 Grimm Olson Young (FL)
 Guinta Palazzo Young (IN)
 Guthrie Paulsen

NOES—190

Ackerman Carney DeGette
 Altmire Carson (IN) DeLauro
 Andrews Chandler DesJarlais
 Baca Chu Deutsch
 Bachmann Cicilline Dicks
 Baldwin Clarke (MI) Dingell
 Barrow Clarke (NY) Doggett
 Bass (CA) Clay Donnelly (IN)
 Becerra Cleaver Doyle
 Berkley Clyburn Edwards
 Berman Cohen Eshoo
 Bishop (GA) Connolly (VA) Farr
 Bishop (NY) Conyers Fattah
 Boswell Costa Filner
 Brady (PA) Costello Fudge
 Braley (IA) Courtney Garamendi
 Broun (GA) Critz Gonzalez
 Brown (FL) Crowley Green, Al
 Butterfield Cummings Green, Gene
 Canseco Davis (CA) Griffith (VA)
 Capps Davis (IL) Grijalva
 Cardoza DeFazio Gutierrez
 Carnahan

Hahn	Matsui	Ryan (OH)	Bono Mack	Herger	Polis	Boren	Hanna	Nugent
Hanabusa	McCarthy (NY)	Sánchez, Linda	Boswell	Herrera Beutler	Pompeo	Brady (PA)	Harris	Oliver
Hastings (FL)	McCollum	T.	Boustany	Higgins	Posey	Burgess	Hastings (FL)	Pallone
Heinrich	McDermott	Sanchez, Loretta	Brady (TX)	Hinojosa	Price (GA)	Cardoza	Heck	Pascarell
Higgins	McGovern	Sarbanes	Braley (IA)	Holden	Price (NC)	Carney	Himes	Pastor (AZ)
Himes	McNerney	Schakowsky	Brooks	Huelskamp	Quayle	Chandler	Hirono	Payne
Hinojosa	Meeks	Schiff	Brown (GA)	Huizenga (MI)	Quigley	Clarke (NY)	Hochul	Peters
Hirono	Michaud	Schrader	Brown (FL)	Hultgren	Rangel	Clay	Holt	Peterson
Hochul	Miller (NC)	Schwartz	Buchanan	Hunter	Rehberg	Cleaver	Honda	Poe (TX)
Holden	Miller, George	Scott (VA)	Bucshon	Hurt	Reichert	Conyers	Hoyer	Rahall
Holt	Moore	Scott, David	Buerkle	Inslee	Ribble	Costa	Jackson Lee	Reed
Honda	Moran	Serrano	Burton (IN)	Israel	Richardson	Courtney	(TX)	Renacci
Hoyer	Murphy (CT)	Sewell	Butterfield	Issa	Rigell	Cravaack	Johnson (OH)	Reyes
Inslee	Nadler	Sherman	Calvert	Jackson (IL)	Rivera	Crowley	Kind	Richmond
Israel	Napolitano	Sires	Camp	Jenkins	Roby	Davis (IL)	Kinzing (IL)	Rooney
Jackson (IL)	Neal	Slaughter	Campbell	Johnson (GA)	Roe (TN)	DeFazio	Kucinich	Rush
Jackson Lee	Oliver	Smith (WA)	Cansco	Johnson (IL)	Rogers (AL)	Dent	Larson (CT)	Ryan (OH)
(TX)	Owens	Speier	Cantor	Johnson, E. B.	Rogers (KY)	Deutch	Latham	Sánchez, Linda
Johnson (GA)	Pallone	Stark	Capito	Johnson, Sam	Rogers (MI)	Dold	Lee (CA)	T.
Johnson, E. B.	Pascarell	Sutton	Capps	Jones	Rohrabacher	Donnelly (IN)	Lewis (GA)	Sarbanes
Jones	Pastor (AZ)	Thompson (CA)	Carnahan	Jordan	Rokita	Duffy	LoBiondo	Schakowsky
Kaptur	Paul	Thompson (MS)	Carson (IN)	Kaptur	Ros-Lehtinen	Edwards	Loeb sack	Schiff
Keating	Payne	Tierney	Carter	Keating	Gibbs	Filner	Lowey	Schilling
Kildee	Pelosi	Tonko	Cassidy	Kelly	Ross (FL)	Fitzpatrick	Lynch	Shuler
Kind	Perlmutter	Towns	Chabot	Kildee	Ross (AR)	Forbes	Maloney	Sires
Kissell	Peters	Tsongas	Chaffetz	King (IA)	Rothman (NJ)	Fox	Matheson	Slaughter
Kucinich	Peterson	Van Hollen	Chu	King (NY)	Roybal-Allard	Gardner	Matsui	Stivers
Langevin	Pingree (ME)	Velázquez	Cicilline	Kingston	Royce	Gerlach	McCotter	Sutton
Larsen (WA)	Polis	Visclosky	Clarke (MI)	Kissell	Ruppersberger	Gibbs	McDermott	Terry
Larson (CT)	Price (NC)	Walz (MN)	Clyburn	Kline	Ryan (WI)	Gibson	McGovern	Thompson (CA)
Lee (CA)	Quigley	Wasserman	Coble	Labrador	Sánchez, Loretta	Gingrey (GA)	McKinley	Thompson (MS)
Levin	Rahall	Schultz	Coffman (CO)	Lamborn	Scalise	Graves (MO)	Meeks	Tiberi
Lewis (GA)	Rangel	Waters	Cohen	Lance	Schmidt	Green, Gene	Miller (FL)	Towns
Lipinski	Reyes	Watt	Conaway	Landry	Schock	Grijalva	Moore	Velázquez
Loeb sack	Richardson	Welch	Connolly (VA)	Langevin	Schrader	Grimm	Napolitano	Visclosky
Lofgren, Zoe	Richmond	Wilson (FL)	Cooper	Lankford	Schwartz	Hahn	Neal	Wu
Lowey	Rohrabacher	Woolsey	Costello	Larsen (WA)	Schweikert			
Luján	Ross (AR)	Wu	Crawford	LaTourette	Scott (SC)			
Lynch	Rothman (NJ)	Yarmuth	Crenshaw	Latta	Scott (VA)			
Mack	Roybal-Allard		Critz	Levin	Scott, Austin			
Maloney	Ruppersberger		Cuellar	Lewis (CA)	Scott, David			
Markey	Rush		Culberson	Lipinski	Sensenbrenner			
			Cummings	Lofgren, Zoe	Serrano			
			Davis (CA)	Long	Sessions			
			Davis (KY)	Lucas	Sewell			
			DeGette	Luetkemeyer	Sherman			
			DeLauro	Luján	Shimkus			
			Denham	Lummis	Shuster			
			DesJarlais	Lungren, Daniel	Simpson			
			Diaz-Balart	E.	Smith (NE)			
			Dingell	Mack	Smith (NJ)			
			Doggett	Manzullo	Smith (TX)			
			Doyle	Marchant	Smith (WA)			
			Dreier	Marino	Southerland			
			Duncan (SC)	Markey	Speier			
			Duncan (TN)	McCarthy (CA)	Stark			
			Ellmers	McCarthy (NY)	Stearns			
			Emerson	McCaul	Stutzman			
			Engel	McClintock	Sullivan			
			Eshoo	McCollum	Thompson (PA)			
			Farenthold	McHenry	Thornberry			
			Farr	McIntyre	Tierney			
			Fattah	McKeon	Tipton			
			Fincher	McMorris	Tonko			
			Flake	Rodgers	Tsongas			
			Fleischmann	McNerney	Turner			
			Fleming	Meehan	Upton			
			Flores	Mica	Van Hollen			
			Fortenberry	Michaud	Walberg			
			Frank (MA)	Miller (MI)	Walden			
			Franks (AZ)	Miller (NC)	Walsh (IL)			
			Frelinghuysen	Miller, Gary	Walz (MN)			
			Fudge	Miller, George	Wasserman			
			Galleghy	Moran	Schultz			
			Garamendi	Mulvaney	Waters			
			Garrett	Murphy (CT)	Watt			
			Gonzalez	Murphy (PA)	Waxman			
			Goodlatte	Myrick	Webster			
			Gosar	Nadler	Welch			
			Gowdy	Neugebauer	West			
			Granger	Noem	Westmoreland			
			Graves (GA)	Nunnelee	Whitfield			
			Green, Al	Olson	Wilson (FL)			
			Griffin (AR)	Owens	Wilson (SC)			
			Griffith (VA)	Palazzo	Wittman			
			Guinta	Paul	Wolf			
			Guthrie	Paulsen	Womack			
			Hall	Pearce	Woodall			
			Hanabusa	Pelosi	Woolsey			
			Harper	Pence	Yarmuth			
			Hartzler	Perlmutter	Yoder			
			Hastings (WA)	Petri	Young (FL)			
			Hayworth	Pingree (ME)	Young (IN)			
			Heinrich	Pitts				
			Hensarling	Platts				

NOT VOTING—8

Blumenauer	Ellison	Hinchey
Capuano	Engel	Young (AK)
Castor (FL)	Giffords	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 2023

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 606 I in advertently missed the vote. Had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 304, nays 112, answered “present” 1, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 607]

YEAS—304

Ackerman	Bartlett	Biggert
Adams	Barton (TX)	Bilbray
Aderholt	Bass (NH)	Billakis
Akin	Becerra	Bishop (GA)
Alexander	Benishak	Bishop (UT)
Austria	Berg	Black
Barletta	Berkley	Blackburn
Barrow	Berman	Bonner
		Altmire
		Andrews

NAYS—112

Baca	Bass (CA)
Baldwin	Bishop (NY)

ANSWERED “PRESENT”—1

Amash

NOT VOTING—15

Bachmann	Cole	Gutierrez
Bachus	Dicks	Hinchey
Blumenauer	Ellison	Nunes
Capuano	Giffords	Runyan
Castor (FL)	Gohmert	Young (AK)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 2029

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2553, AIRPORT AND AIRWAY EXTENSION ACT OF 2011, PART IV

Mr. WEBSTER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112–155) on the resolution (H. Res. 357) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2553) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend the airport improvement program, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 451

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 451.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Iowa?

There was no objection.

WHERE'S YOUR PLAN, MR.
PRESIDENT?

(Mr. FLEMING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, just moments ago this body passed the Cut, Cap, and Balance bill. Today we stand at a crossroads that will define our Nation's financial security for generations. Republicans, we have a plan that cuts the Federal budget, caps Federal spending, and balances the Federal budget with a constitutional amendment so we do not have this problem in perpetuity.

Democrats, well, there is no plan, no plan to bring this country back to financial sanity. Yet my colleagues on the left continue to criticize the House Republican plan. In all the time my colleagues on the Democrat side have been attacking the House Republican plan, they could have come up with one of their own. Even the President talks about his plan; yet he has yet to produce one. This shows once again a complete failure of leadership by President Obama and congressional Democrats.

The American people spoke loudly and clearly in the 2010 elections: They want Federal spending cut. It's that simple. Let's follow through and not let the American people down.

REMEMBERING JAMES T. MOLLOY

(Mr. ENGEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, it is my sad duty to report the passing of a former officer of this House, doorkeeper James T. Molloy.

Jim, as he was known to so many, served as doorkeeper for 20 years, when I first came to Congress from 1974 to 1994. He was known throughout the world for his distinctive introduction of the President and heads of State to Congress. He is the one who would always yell: Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States.

Jim, a native of Buffalo, New York, was a graduate of Canisius College and worked as a fireman and schoolteacher before coming to Washington at the invitation of Congressman John Rooney of New York. He leaves his beloved wife, Roseann, and his daughter, Amy.

We will all miss him. We all remember him, and we all loved him.

HONORING NORTH DAKOTA SENATE MAJORITY LEADER BOB STENEHJEM

(Mr. BERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BERG. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor a statesman and my good friend, Senator Bob Stenehjem, who passed away yesterday in a tragic car accident.

Bob served as the Senate majority leader in North Dakota for 10 years, and he worked incredibly hard for the State that he loved, and he worked through a system that he believed in called the legislative process. He was respected and admired by those of us who served alongside him in the State legislature.

And his tireless legislative work is one of the reasons North Dakota is doing so well today. As Bob would say: We are the envy of the Nation.

It hurts knowing my friend is gone, and I ask that we all keep his wife, Kathy, and the Stenehjem family in our thoughts and prayers.

North Dakota has lost a wonderful public servant. But I know that Bob's character and beliefs will continue through his policy and prosperity for years to come.

I will miss Bob very much.

AMERICANS LOSE WITH PASSAGE
OF CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I just heard celebration just a few minutes ago regarding the passage of the Cut, Cap, and Balance that really should be named the Tap Dance, Establishing the Losers Club for Americans, and the Busting of Benefits for Americans bill, because what we are doing is tap dancing around the responsibility of this Congress to in fact raise the debt limit as we have done 60 times.

And, of course, we are establishing losers by the very fact that interest rates will go up, Social Security and other benefits, Medicare what we are, U.S. credit will be downgraded and the Chamber of Commerce and hundreds of businesses will in fact be begging for us to lift the debt ceiling.

But, more importantly, we will cause America's lack of paying her bills to hurt families and businesses. And let me introduce you to the losers. Now that this bill has passed, welcome to the losers: soldiers and their families, their grandparents and mothers and fathers who are back here in this country while they are on the front lines in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Today we just voted H.R. 2650 to in fact establish a club of losers for these patriots who have served their country. What a shame. What a shame.

TIME FOR WASHINGTON TO LIVE
WITHIN ITS MEANS

(Mr. SCALISE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, tonight the House finally passed a real plan that addresses this Nation's spending crisis.

I think many American families out there already know that Washington

has had a spending problem, because they have been living within their means for a long time. They have been sitting around the kitchen table figuring out how to make do with what they have got. And yet in Washington, it seems like liberal leadership over here wants to ignore the problem.

We have passed a plan today in the House with Cut, Cap, and Balance that controls spending in Washington and puts us on a path to a balanced budget.

And what's the President's plan? We have still yet to hear his plan. All we hear are speeches and class warfare where the President tries to pit one group of Americans against another, as if corporate jet owners and millionaires and billionaires can solve the problem. If he confiscated every single dollar they have, it wouldn't address the problem.

Now it is time to get real. If the President wants to get serious about addressing the spending problems in this Nation, it is time for him to confront what Cut, Cap, and Balance really does, and that is to finally tell Washington it is time to start living within your means, just like families across this country have been doing for years.

□ 2040

MEDICARE UNDER ATTACK

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STUTZMAN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) is recognized for half the remaining time until 10 p.m. as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. TONKO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is our pleasure during the next 40-or-so minutes to express concerns about a Medicare program that has served this Nation's seniors so very well for 45 years and is at risk of being ended.

Tonight, we witnessed on this floor the third such vote to end Medicare by the Republican majority. We know that our seniors would be forced to shop in a private market. The certainty of a guaranteed program that has been available to our Nation's seniors since 1966 is at risk. The money that the government would kick in for coverage would not keep pace with the costs for those health care policies, and so our seniors would be forced to dig into their pockets, reach into those pockets and perhaps have their costs, their contributions, more than doubled. This is an unnecessary step that is being taken against our Nation's seniors that is irresponsible.

We believe that what we have seen since that threshold in time in 1965 when we approved such a measure, the impact from the private sector health care industry has witnessed a growth of over 5,000 percent in the cost of premiums in that time since 1965. The impact on seniors has been certainly far

less than that. We have seen the containing of administrative costs, we avoid marketing requirements with the Medicare program, and we have been able to share benefits with our Nation's seniors in a way that protected their health care coverage, that enabled them to enjoy a quality of life.

It can easily be documented that when our Nation's seniors retired back in the sixties, they would see their economic durability challenged. Their strength, their economic opportunity to grow forward into retirement was oftentimes impacted by the cost of medical needs. There was cherry-picking going on, there were opportunities that were denied our Nation's seniors, and they were asked to absorb an inordinate amount of pressure in order to continue forward in soundness, in wellness and certainly to have the coverage that was required to meet their health care needs.

All of this now is at risk with several proposals. We've seen a Ryan plan, a budget that Republicans produced. The Ryan Road to Ruin, as we've designated it, would cause severe hardship on our Nation's seniors. We saw the Republican Study Committee come up with a vote that again ended Medicare. And today, when we witnessed this attempt to play with the United States Constitution, to make it very easy to end Medicare while making it even more difficult to address those deep pockets that get favorable treatment by some go continuing on because it would be more difficult to end that opportunity.

So what we have here tonight is an opportunity to discuss the assault on America's working families, the assault on her seniors, the Nation's seniors, by ending Medicare, ending Medicare that puts the private sector insurance industry in control. They put them in the driver's seat, they require our seniors to shop with a voucher that won't nearly cover the cost of those premiums, and, again, require them to pay double as we go forward.

We are joined by Representative GARAMENDI from California here this evening and Representative JOE COURTNEY from Connecticut. The three of us will share thoughts about how to better address the economic pressures on this Nation today without ending Medicare. It has been a lifesaver for so many of our Nation's seniors and has provided a sense of security, of predictability in their budgeting as they go forward in retirement years.

Representative JOHN GARAMENDI from California, thank you for joining us this evening. You witnessed it here tonight, as Mr. COURTNEY and I both did, Representative COURTNEY from Connecticut and I, witnessed yet another vote that would mean the end for Medicare, because it's an attempt to play with the Constitution, mess with our Constitution in a way that would really focus on hardship for our Nation's seniors.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you very much, Representative TONKO. Thank

you for bringing this issue alive this evening and for giving us this time to discuss this.

Many, many thoughts went through my mind today as this vote and the debate went along. As it was debated by our Republican colleagues, I just couldn't understand where they were coming from. What would motivate them to want to destroy Medicare? And Medicaid? Why would they do that? The thoughts just reeled through my mind, and I'm going, I guess maybe they had had a different experience than I did.

I was a young boy in the 1950s, and there was no Medicare, and there was no Medicaid. My father was a rancher. We grew up in a ranching area up in the foothills of California, in the Mother Lode Gold Country. He took me one day to the county hospital. It was one of the most horrible moments I can remember as a child, because the wards, there was just a ward, maybe 20 or 30 very elderly men, and then on the other side elderly women, who were dying. Their medical care wasn't available to them.

Sometime later, maybe another month after that, we were out chasing cattle that had gotten loose—I was just a young man—and one of our neighbors, we came upon the neighbor and asked where the cattle might be, and he said they were down that way. He had this huge growth on his mouth, and my dad asked about that, and he said, it's cancer. He had no insurance. He had no care. He was probably 70, 75, 80 years old. He died shortly thereafter.

In 1965, this country did a remarkable, beautiful, wonderful thing. We gave to every senior in America medical care, doctor and hospital care, the opportunity to live longer, to have that cancer treated, to eliminate those wards in the county hospital where people simply were warehoused to die. And here today, for the third time since January of this year, the Republicans have put forth a proposal—and hopefully it will never become law—to terminate Medicare.

Have no doubt about it, Mr. TONKO, they would terminate Medicare. As you said, they would turn it over to the private insurance companies, with a voucher, insufficient to pay for medical care insurance from an insurance company today. The discrimination that exists in insurance for people with pre-existing conditions, and the paramount preexisting condition in America is age. If you're 55, 60, 65, you have a pre-existing condition. It's called age. What will come of those people?

What is this Nation all about? Who are we as Americans? Who are we as Americans that on this floor in a charade, in a falsehood, brought to America today, and twice previously, legislation that doesn't deal with the fundamental issues of the budget, the tax issues, the revenue side of it, real reform in the programs, whether it's Medicare or the military. Real reforms. No, no, no. Just cut, slash, burn, and take your seniors, toss them aside.

This is not the America that I want to live in. This is the America of the 1950s when there was no Medicare and when seniors were in wards left to die, or in no care at all. Every American 65 years of age is guaranteed a comprehensive health care benefit. It's called Medicare. Whatever else we stand for, that's where the Democrats stand. We will fight this fight. We will not lose this fight.

□ 2050

This is about the very heart and soul of this Nation.

Mr. TONKO, thank you for these moments.

Mr. TONKO. I think it's important for us to share with the American public what's happening on this floor in the House of Representatives. So many suggest that the history that drove Medicare to be developed, the dynamics that were so impacting on the senior community across this country coast-to-coast, could be revisited if their proposal to end Medicare—the Republican proposal to end Medicare—were to take hold. And I know Representative COURTNEY, JOE COURTNEY from Connecticut, understands that. He has shared those concerns over and over again, that we could go back and revisit history of 45 years ago, 46 years ago, when people literally were impacted by cherry-picking going on, where they couldn't afford policies even if they were offered to them, and many times they couldn't get policies written to cover them.

Representative COURTNEY, thank you for joining us this evening on what is an important bit of information exchange for America. They need to know that the seniors are at risk.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Mr. TONKO.

I want to thank Congressman GARAMENDI, who did great service as the insurance commissioner in the State of California. He understands these issues intimately.

I think this is really a generational gut check for our country in terms of whether or not this attempt to butcher Medicare, one of the most successful programs in American and world history, is going to succeed or not. John described very powerfully the public wards in the public hospitals and the third-tier status that seniors had prior to 1965. Kaiser Permanente actually did a study in terms of just reminding us of what this country faced when President Johnson signed that legislation on Harry Truman's porch step. At the time Medicare passed, only 50 percent of seniors over 65 in America had health insurance of any sort whatsoever. Part of it was class. Part of it was the underwriting rules. But part of it is, just as Mr. GARAMENDI said, age is a factor which carries risk. And there is no insurance company that evaluates risk within its own book of business that can really take all comers when you're talking about a population of 65 and up. Life expectancy was 70 in 1965.

So we passed Medicare, and what happened is we created a guaranteed benefit. The genius of Medicare is that we pooled the risk, and we actually made an affordable system financed through payroll taxes, premiums. The system has had its ups and downs financially over the past 45 years. The fact of the matter is we now have a life expectancy of 78 in this country. It has worked. We have also alleviated the crushing out-of-pocket costs that seniors faced in 1965, and we have elevated the status of people in that demographic in a way that the private insurance market just was totally incapable of doing it.

Last year, we passed the Affordable Care Act, which modified Medicare and made some important improvements and changes. We now have annual checkups covered. We now have cancer screenings. We now have extended prescription drug benefits. And one of the things that the Republicans claim, in trying to sell this measure with snake oil, frankly, is that somehow people who are 55 and above today will not be affected by the passage of the Ryan plan. In fact, we know that if you look at that plan, it cancels all of those new benefits in year one.

So seniors who now—hundreds of thousands—have gotten their annual checkups in the last 8 or 9 months since the new benefit kicked in, cancer screenings that kicked in, prescription drug assistance that's now providing health for seniors in the doughnut hole, all of that would be canceled today, and any prospective change that is proposed in this system, which again, starting for individuals 55 and under, now will be left in a private insurance market with a totally inadequate voucher, as Mr. GARAMENDI said. Again, that's where the real butchering of Medicare takes place. But there is no question for anyone who's listening tonight that if you are a senior citizen on Medicare, the false claim that you are somehow insulated from this measure because of the fact that you're already in the program, that is something that people have got to recognize and understand. That new benefits that are making this a smarter, more effective program are going to be canceled in year one if this measure, God forbid, ever is enacted.

Mr. TONKO. Very well said, Representative COURTNEY.

What I think upsets all three of us is the fact that, with the Affordable Care Act, where we found savings by reining in some of the profit margins of insurance companies that were used—those savings were used to fill the doughnut hole that you just talked about—they're now taking those savings and sharing them in a way that's not going to benefit seniors, and they're not going to fill that doughnut hole. So when seniors come to us and say, Look, what is this talk about Medicare? they're saying, You destroyed Medicare. No. We were working to make it stronger. We're working to fill the

doughnut hole so that prescription costs that are impacting seniors—my gosh, with the passage of time, we have seen advancements in pharmaceutical research that provides more opportunity for wellness or for cure. That has stretched opportunities galore for our seniors. But they would raid those savings and pull them away again from our senior community and use those in other ways, which we find very offensive.

This ending of Medicare with this third vote tonight, how much more do we need to challenge the security of seniors out there? They're disturbed every time they hear of this effort to end Medicare. We want to make it stronger. We're talking about all sorts of efforts to bulk purchase pharmaceuticals for the Medicare program, which would make it stronger. They forecast \$156 billion or \$157 billion of savings to the Federal Government that would provide correspondingly some \$27 billion in savings for individual seniors just by doing that.

So there's an all-out effort here to strengthen Medicare, not to end it. And it's sad that tonight we witnessed the third vote cast here, with the majority's support so that it passed in the House, to move forward and include in that packaging the ending of Medicare.

Representative GARAMENDI, you have a chart up there.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I have this chart. We've used it before as we've discussed Medicare. It brings this whole thing right into focus. This is a tombstone. Medicare, 1966–2011. Created by LBJ. Destroyed by the GOP. It may be a little harsh, but this is really the reality of what is going on here. It's the end of Medicare as we know it. It's the end of the guaranteed benefit program, and it does turn everyone who is 55 years and younger over to the insurance industry.

I spoke to this briefly before—and Mr. COURTNEY, thank you for reminding me that I was the insurance commissioner in California for 8 years. I fought tooth and nail with the insurance industry over health care and automobile and homeowner and other kinds of insurance. In the health care sector, the private health insurance companies are about profit. That's their goal. They are profit-making organizations. And to enhance their profits, they do a variety of things. Deny coverage. You've got a policy? Oh, but that was a preexisting condition, and therefore we're not going to cover it. Or, gee, that kind of treatment is not covered.

There was a lot of talk about death panels. I'll tell you where the death panel is—and I saw this as insurance commissioner. I saw insurance companies denying treatment that led to the death of numerous individuals over those 8 years. The real death panels have been the private insurance companies. In Medicare, I know of no case where that has happened. Maybe it did, but I'm unaware of it, and I had the

biggest State—California. Also, there is this kind of discrimination that takes place.

Let me just put this additionally to it. The private health insurance company is grossly inefficient. It is inefficient. It has enormous additional costs that Medicare does not have. By comparison, Medicare is a very efficient operation. It takes about 2 percent to raise the money and another, maybe, 2 or 3 percent to pay the bills and, on the provider side, maybe another 10 percent to do the billing also. Maybe the total cost is somewhere at about 15 percent in administrative costs. The private insurance companies run somewhere near 30 percent in administrative costs when you consider profit, when you consider the advertising, sales commissions. And they have thousands of different policies covering this, but not covering that, this deductible, that deductible. And when it gets to the provider, the ultimate chaos. So the administrative cost in the private system is about twice what it is in Medicare. Medicare is a very efficient, very effective, universal program that raises the money in a very fair way.

□ 2100

All of us pay for it, and all of us should be getting that benefit when we get to be 65—but not so in the private sector. Our Republican colleagues want to take all of this money and hand it over to the private insurance market and say, "Okay. You guys take care of it." It's less efficient. It's certainly deadly in denying coverage and benefits. Just compared to Medicare, it's very inefficient.

Mr. TONKO. Representative GARAMENDI, earlier you had talked about the impact on the 55-year-old or 54-year-old. If you look at a 54-year-old today, that individual is advised to save some \$182,000 to \$190,000 so as to have that available cash to cover the deficiency that's going to come with this end to Medicare, where you shop with this voucher, and it's only going to cover 32 cents on the dollar. So that 54-year-old is already impacted, but there is more to the picture than that.

When you draw the line in the sand and say, "look, we end Medicare, and so those under 55 today will have to fend for themselves," they'll shop out in the private sector market, but when you don't have the newly entering senior community as they turn 65 enter into the mix, there is a correlation of age with the drawdown of the health care system. As you take the younger senior population, they provide for that ebb and flow within the pooling that Representative COURTNEY talked about earlier. The beauty of the program is that you pool seniors from the very youngest of seniors to "senior" seniors, and as that need for health care grows with age, the newly entering help provide that balance. So the

stability of the program and the durability of that program is at risk, I believe, because we're changing the dynamics.

Representative COURTNEY, you have talked about the security of that program, of the stability that we can provide, and how we in this House, as Democrats, have been working to strengthen the Medicare program: to build the trust fund so that there is this underpinning of support that will enable the program to continue to meet the needs of the upcoming population of baby boomers.

Mr. COURTNEY. Right, and thank you.

Because there was so much, almost, fear language surrounding this debate in terms of whether Medicare is bankrupt, whether Medicare is going broke, whether Medicare is running out of money, it's important for people to go back and read the trustees' report, which was just issued a few weeks ago. It is a report that is issued on an annual basis. It has been since 1966 when Harry Truman was the first Medicare beneficiary to sign up for the program with his wife, Bess; but it has had its ups-and-downs over the years.

The report that just came out said that Medicare is fully solvent, can pay all of its bills through 2024 and that it can pay 90 percent of its bills through 2045.

Now, there is no question that, compared to last year's report, there was some deterioration in terms of that projection, but the trustees were careful to point out the fact that that slippage in terms of some of the years of lost solvency was due to the economy and due to payroll tax collection. It had nothing to do with overuse or certainly nothing to do with the Affordable Care Act. In fact, they said the opposite, which was that the Affordable Care Act actually extended the solvency of the Medicare program by a factor of 8 years. Thank God we had passed that legislation, because we really would almost be bumping up into a cliff at this point if we hadn't done it.

But again, I think it's important for people to remember that, going back in time to 1970, the Medicare solvency report that came out for the trustees projected 2 years of solvency as to when it was going to hit that tipping point. When Ronald Reagan was President in 1983 and came to the Congress, seeking an increase in the debt limit to avoid default, Medicare solvency was half of what it is today. So the fact is that it has had its challenges.

As you point out, there are good ideas about using bulk purchasing, and there are good ideas about revisiting the subsidized insurance program in terms of the size of the insurance company subsidies. We can deal with that 10 percent shortfall between 2024 and 2045 without butchering the program. That really is, in my opinion, the wolf in sheep's clothing surrounding this debate in that somehow people are using

solvency reports as an excuse to basically eliminate the guaranteed benefit.

Again, it is our duty as Members of Congress to make sure that we protect for the next generation the benefit that our parents enjoyed and that pushed out solvency from age 70 in 1965 to age 78 today. That is a Medicare success, and we cannot go backwards as a Nation.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. COURTNEY, thank you for pointing out that very, very important fact that seems to have been totally overlooked in today's debate, at least by our Republican colleagues.

There is another factor here, and that is that Medicare, like all medical services across the United States, whether you are in Kaiser or in Blue Cross, Anthem or Medicare—all of these programs are carried along on the inflationary wave in health care, which actually runs two or three times the general inflation of our economy. So health care is growing very, very rapidly overall. It turns out that the inflation rate in Medicare is about one half the inflation rate in the general health care system. Now, if Medicare is part of the health care system and takes care of the most expensive part of the population, how is it that Medicare is not inflating—the costs are not going up—as fast as the costs are in the private health insurance sector?

The reason is, as I discussed before, Medicare is very efficient. It is a very, very efficient program: a universal benefit across the Nation, uniform; clear deductibles, clear co-pays; and in Medicare part B, cost sharing. All of that is there and it's understood. The private insurance has 1,000 different policies—chaos throughout the marketplace.

Now, we've talked about this a little bit. We really need to have Americans understand that the Affordable Health Care Act had a whole series of very, very important legislative activities that will reduce the overall cost of health care.

An example is electronic medical records, not written records by a doctor or a nurse—either legible or illegible, stacked in a great big stack of papers—and all of us have seen those. Electronic medical records. It's a very, very important way to reduce problems, to reduce misunderstandings, a back-and-forth with drugs and the like.

Another very important factor is hospital infection rates. Hospitals have a very high infection rate, and don't get paid a second time for retreating the original illness when that person comes in. It has a very, very important impact on reducing the cost of medical services. There were many other things you talked about—the drug benefit.

By the way, how is it that during the Bush period when the Medicare part D, the drug benefit, went into place that the pharmaceutical industry was so powerful that they denied American taxpayers the opportunity for the government to negotiate for the price of drugs?

Mr. TONKO, you raised that point. To this day, we've not had our Republican colleagues come along and say, "Oh, yeah. There's a good way to save money. We'll just negotiate for the drugs." It turns out, as to the military and the health care services provided by it, they can negotiate for drugs, but Medicare cannot.

So it costs us, you said, \$150 billion over 10 years. Is that the number you came up with?

Mr. TONKO. I believe it's \$157 billion, right. It's a benefit that ought to be shared on behalf of our Nation's seniors.

To the points made earlier in this discussion as to the efforts for prevention, for screenings, that do not require co-payments or deductibles—the annual checkups—these are all elements that were introduced and imbedded into our reform package to contain costs, to bend that cost curve.

The real concern that so many have raised from the Democratic membership in this House is that we're not providing the sorts of savings for our seniors, that we're not bending that cost curve. When you send them out to shop and don't even give them adequate coverage—32 cents—and then the indexing into the future is not keeping pace with the projected inflation of health care costs, we're putting them at risk. We're targeting them for defeat. They're saying, Well, you're going to have 13 or 15 plans from which to choose as you shop in the open market.—That isn't bending the cost curve.

So the economic consequences here are, first and foremost, the hardship that seniors will have to embrace, that they'll have to endure. Then also, when we look back at 1966 and 1965, the available cash—the economic vitality of a senior household—was drained. It went south because medical costs were usurping their retirement funds.

□ 2110

Think of it. Those dollars not only help provide stability and security for our Nation's seniors, but that's available cash that they can use to perhaps have a meal out at a restaurant in their local community. There are dollars that are made available that get spun into the regional economy that allow for the comeback. So this is very interesting.

The programs, the cuts that they're suggesting, are all in areas that can help create jobs and improve economic viability.

Mr. COURTNEY. We had a town hall meeting in my district, talking about the Medicare program. We had Dr. Rebecca Andrews—she's a primary care doc at the University of Connecticut Health Center—and she was talking about the new annual screening coverage where she had one of her patients who was kind of a big husky guy, kind of. They used to kind of razz each other. But she had 45 minutes with him. She did the soup-to-nuts checkup.

She ordered a urine test, which she normally wouldn't with the old system. She found a tiny, microscopic spec of blood, or they did at the lab, which they were a little concerned about. She called him back in, did a follow-up. It turned out he had bladder cancer.

Because they were able to detect it so quickly because of that annual checkup and the cancer screening tests that are now covered under Medicare, it was a day surgery, in and out, a really very nonintrusive event that cost a fraction of what it would have been if he had not had that checkup to detect that cancer early. And she had at least two other patients, because of the new Affordable Care Act annual checkup, where they detected cancer and again were able to intervene at a low cost compared to what it would have been if it had been a full-blown case.

Mr. TONKO. Representative COURTNEY, I think what we're talking about here is legitimate reform in a way that bends that cost curve and takes a sound economic program like Medicare for our Nation's seniors and allows for that benefit and pulls the resources from coast to coast to serve our Nation's seniors well.

The concern here is, Representative GARAMENDI, they want to give their friends with deep pockets more opportunity for business. End Medicare to provide more business for the private sector insurance industry. Privatize Social Security, right?

Mr. GARAMENDI. It was the bill they introduced.

Mr. TONKO. I think you have a chart there that talks about another special interest.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Before we go to this other issue—and we've got another 7 or 8 minutes here—another major program that is targeted by our Republican friends is Medicaid. Medicaid is a program for impoverished Americans. Seventy percent of Medicaid is for seniors and nursing homes. They want to take some \$700 billion out of Medicaid. In California, that's called MediCal, but in each State they have their own program. But \$700 billion goes directly to seniors that are in nursing homes. What will come of those people that are now in nursing homes when this program, Medicaid, is reduced as proposed in the budget that was passed today?

But, having said that, let's turn to the other side of the coin.

You want to make cuts, but do you want to cut Medicare? Do you want to cut Medicaid?—or do you want to cut the subsidies that exist in American business today?

This is just one of hundreds of subsidies, tax breaks, given to American businesses that they don't need.

Big Oil receives my tax money, your tax money, and the American taxpayers' money to the tune of—I don't know—\$5 billion, \$6 billion, \$7 billion a year. Yet look at their profits. Look at their profits here. This is just 1 year. You add up these profits over the last

decade. Exxon last year, \$10 billion; Conoco \$2.1 billion; Chevron, \$6 billion; BP, infamous BP, \$7.2 billion. Yet they receive our tax subsidies. You take this and you apply it over the last decade, and it is just \$950 billion of profit—\$50 billion less than a trillion dollars of profit.

And yet defending the oil companies are our Republican colleagues, saying no, no, no. You can't touch Big Oil. You can't take away their tax subsidies, but you can surely go after seniors and take \$6,000 out of the pocket of every senior with this Medicare program.

Mr. TONKO. It's very obvious from the polls being taken by many, many organizations out there that the American public said it's about jobs. We need jobs in the economy in order to make things work. It will reduce the deficit. It will put people to work. It will start growing the economic engine of neighborhoods and States and the entire country.

But what we're seeing is that there's this Republican assault on the middle class. They're cutting programs that serve the middle class. They're cutting programs that create jobs and invest in a new economy. But they're leaving alone these groups that are actually not—they're earning record profits, and we're still giving them hard-earned taxpayer dollars in the form of handouts and subsidies to the oil industry, to various industries that are just befriended by those in the House that want to play off the middle class and end Medicare, which is a very dangerous precedent that will be set.

Representative GARAMENDI, you wanted to make a point.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. COURTNEY just pointed back to me. I was going to pass it to him.

We just talked about Big Oil, the subsidies to Big Oil that are being protected by our Republican colleagues, making sure that Big Oil gets their money. That's not the only thing.

They are fiercely fighting, fighting fiercely to maintain the Bush-era tax cuts for the superwealthy. We're talking about millionaires.

So what does it mean for millionaires to hang on to that tax cut that occurred in 2003, I believe? For millionaires, that tax cut is worth \$200,000 a year if you have an income of \$1 million. Now, there are folks out there that have incomes of a billion. So you can kind of expand that, add five zeroes. You get close to what it might be for a billionaire, and there are billionaires out there. What does it mean for seniors? It means it's going to cost them some \$6,000 a year in what will be their Medicare costs in the future.

Mr. TONKO. And that's equaling 33 seniors.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you. You read the chart better than I do.

Mr. TONKO. Thirty-three seniors paying \$6,000 more per year. So we're making happy one millionaire and we're economically distressing 33 sen-

iors who are going to pay at least \$6,000 more to have the health care coverage if they, in fact, can get it.

Mr. COURTNEY. If I can just sort of finish, the point is that we were talking about two programs right now that did not create the deficit issue that is facing this country.

We had two massive tax cuts for the super-rich. We have two wars that haven't been paid for and a prescription drug benefit which was passed during the last administration which was never paid for, which we dealt with in the Affordable Care Act to offset that. The Trustees report says that we've got 100 percent solvency through 2024, 90 percent solvency through 2045, and 100 percent solvency for the Social Security system until 2037.

Mr. TONKO. And, Representative COURTNEY, when you talk about all of those costs, they were never put in the budget. They were off-budget. So that meant that those two wars, the pharmaceutical deal for Medicare part D, and the tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires all had to be borrowed money, and so we borrowed from China, Saudi Arabia, all to make it happen.

This was dishonest budgeting, and it was favoring deep pockets over, evidently, seniors. And now the solution? End Medicare, block grant Medicaid, privatize Social Security. This is an assault on middle class values on our Nation's seniors.

Representative GARAMENDI, we'll move to you.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Representative TONKO, thank you so very much for bringing us together tonight to talk about Medicare and the Republican proposal to terminate Medicare and significantly reduce Medicaid programs for seniors in nursing homes.

This is a pivotal moment in this Nation. It really speaks to our values. It speaks to who we are as Americans, who we care for, and what we are concerned about.

Mr. COURTNEY. I'll just say, I'm sure your offices are like mine. This is the number one issue that we're getting calls, emails, and mail on: Are you guys going to stand up and live up to your sacred duty to protect these programs—Medicare, Social Security, and Medicaid—that our middle class depends on?

Mr. TONKO. At least nine of every 10 comments we get either through the mail or on the phone are: Save Medicare. Don't let them mess with it.

We're fighting the good fight here. America needs to know there is a risk of losing Medicare. There are those who want to end it. We saw another vote here tonight.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 2120

TAX LOOPHOLES, EXEMPTIONS,
AND DEDUCTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. GRIFFIN) is recognized for the remaining time until 10 p.m. as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to some of the speeches here tonight, and I thought I would take a little time to address some of the arguments. But first I would like to just welcome my friend from Wisconsin, Representative DUFFY, who joins me here on the floor tonight.

I've been listening, first and foremost, to the discussion of tax loopholes, tax exemptions, deductions. Specifically, I heard a lot of talk about tax deductions for oil companies. Well, I'm glad that the gentleman from the other side raised that tonight because I was thinking, and before I got here in January, for the last 2 years, this House was controlled by Speaker PELOSI and the other side of the aisle. The Senate, down the way here, is controlled by the same party, and the White House, President Obama. Now, if my math is correct, that means that Democrats were in control of the House; they were in control of the Senate; and they were in control of the White House.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it puzzles me that they were in control of all of those parts of government, yet not once did they eliminate these subsidies that they're talking about. They had control of the last Congress, 2 years, and nothing was done. I guess they decided only this year that subsidies for U.S. businesses should be eliminated.

Well, I'm not sure why they didn't do anything about that in the last Congress, but I will say that I am pleased that they understand the House budget that we passed because in our House budget that we passed a few months ago, that's exactly what we voted to do. We voted for a framework that eliminates tax deductions, tax exemptions, credits, loopholes, whatever you want to call them. That's what our budget does. And in doing so, we're following some of the proposals put forth by the President's own debt commission, a debt commission that he has yet to follow; but they recommended some similar proposals.

What we do is we lower the top rate and eliminate a bunch of the deductions that, admittedly, upper income folks take. So we eliminate those. But at the same time, we lower the top rate so that we can be more competitive, and we can have a pro-growth, pro-jobs Tax Code. So what we end up with is a fairer, flatter Tax Code, one that encourages private sector job creation.

You might ask, Mr. Speaker, Well, then, why do you disagree with the President on this particular issue? Well, like I said, we're happy that he's decided to come our way and that he

sees the light on tax reform and closing loopholes.

The reason the House leadership is opposed to the President's posture on this in the debt ceiling negotiations is because they want to have their cake and eat it too. The President wants to have his cake and eat it too on this issue. He wants to close all the loopholes, yes; and at the same time, he wants to raise taxes. So he wants to increase taxes two ways; whereas, his own debt commission and our House leadership want to reduce the top rate, close the loopholes so that we have a fairer, flatter, simpler, less complex tax system.

So here's the contrast: we agree on closing the loopholes, although we can't figure out what happened last Congress when the Democrats controlled the House, Senate, and White House and did nothing about it. We did something about it. We approved a budget that addresses precisely this issue. So I just wanted to clarify our position on that.

I see that my friend from Wisconsin would like to say a few words. Please join right in.

Mr. DUFFY. I appreciate the gentleman from Arkansas yielding.

I think you make very powerful arguments as to why our friends on the other side of the aisle were unwilling to get rid of these horrible tax loopholes, because when the two of us got to this House in January, they were here. They were here in a Democrat-controlled House, Senate, and with a Democratic President; and they did nothing to do away with these loopholes. When we got to this House, we said, No more crony capitalism, no more corporate welfare. Let's do away with all of these loopholes, all of these nooks and crannies where some big business will hide their money and not pay their fair share. And we'll restructure our Tax Code to make us more competitive in this global marketplace.

And when we did that, the Democrats said, no, they didn't want to participate in reforming the Tax Code. But then they have no problem standing here today and making arguments that we're the ones that want to keep these loopholes in place. Absolutely false.

I've had a chance to sit in and listen to the debate that's going on in this House. I continually hear my friends across the aisle talk about jobs that are getting shipped overseas. And I've got to tell you, that is a great concern for me. They missed the disconnect, however, between jobs leaving America and the regulation and tax rates that we have in America.

You know, this isn't 1960. It's not 1980. It's not 1990. We are in a new global marketplace. In days gone by, America was the only place really to do business. But now our capital, it can go anywhere in the world. It can go to Thailand, India, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico. It can go anywhere. And when you start raising taxes on our job cre-

ators, and then you sit and scratch your head and wonder why they're leaving, it's pretty obvious.

We see it on a smaller level in our States. When we see more regulation, more taxes in our States, like California, all of a sudden businesses pack up, and they go to another State that has better rules, regulations, and taxes. That happens on a broader scale right here in America. You raise the cost of doing business; you kill jobs in America. And you know what, in the end, does it hurt these businesses? No. The people that it hurts are our constituents, our families, our people in our districts that are yearning for opportunities, yearning for a job. It's those people that this hurts.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. I just want to ask the gentleman, what will it take for folks here to start wondering why businesses are leaving the country? It seems as if they always want to point the finger to someone else or some third party, some external cause. Maybe we should think about the fact that the policies adopted by the Federal Government have an impact. Businesses react to policies passed in this Congress, in the Senate, and particularly to regulations drafted, promulgated by the administration.

□ 2130

At some point we have to say wait a minute. Businesses are leaving, taking their jobs elsewhere. Maybe, just maybe, they're doing it because we're running them off. We need to ask that question.

Back in my district, in the Second District of Arkansas, in Little Rock and the surrounding area, I like to say, we've got big job creators and small job creators, but the common denominator is they're job creators.

I don't ask that people like business or be in business or whatever. I just ask that they acknowledge that businesses create jobs. And if we run businesses off, if we adopt policies that curtail economic growth and chase businesses away to other countries, we're going to lose jobs. That's not hard to figure out.

Mr. DUFFY. I would agree with the gentleman. And I think it's interesting, as a guy who's come here from central and northern Wisconsin, Wisconsin's Seventh Congressional District, I see that this is a House that will continually talk about political spin and political positioning instead of actual policies that are going to work for American families and American businesses.

I think it's interesting the President likes to talk about corporate jet loopholes. For me, I think it's important that we're clear. The tax increases that the President and my friends across the aisle in the Democrat Party are talking about, these are tax increases on the small job creators in my district, the ones, the same ones that we are asking to expand and grow and create jobs and put our hardworking families of Wisconsin back to work. It's

those people that they're asking to raise taxes on, and I think that's absolutely wrong.

I always hear my friends across the aisle talk about the nineties and how great things were in the nineties. They were great. And they talk about the tax rates of the nineties.

I think it's important to note that even Bill Clinton has said, listen, this isn't 1990 anymore. He has looked at our proposal and basically said, listen, let's make our top rates more competitive in this global marketplace. If we make it more competitive, in the end we are going to be more competitive.

And I just think it's so important that we take a hard look at the regulations and the taxes that come from this town because, in the end, if we engage, if we have policies that allow our people to do what they do best, which is innovate and grow and expand and reap the benefits of their hard work, I think we're going to see America great again and create jobs. But if we stifle that, I think we're going to have a new America that I think none of us would recognize.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. I think ultimately the standard for me is: Am I doing things that make the United States more attractive to job creators or less attractive?

We want to be a country where job creators around the world and here say, America is where I want to do business. America is where I want to innovate. America is where I want to create. America is where I want to pursue technological advancement and create jobs. America is the only place to do business. America is the only place to create jobs. That's the America that I want to help create. I don't want to create an America that punishes job creators in such a way that they flee the country. And that's exactly, on many fronts, what we're doing.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. DUFFY. Thank you. I appreciate the gentleman for yielding.

When I talk to my job creators back in Wisconsin, never do they say, We're leaving because of the quality of workers we have in this area. Actually, they say we have the hardest working, most productive, smartest workers right here in Wisconsin, right here in America. We don't leave because of the work force. We leave because of the regulations that come from this town, the taxes that come from this town. And I think it's important, again, that we continue to look at that, because, in the end, this doesn't hurt businesses. It hurts families.

We want to make sure we keep our families strong in America with plenty of opportunity. It makes me think to the conversation that happened earlier about Medicare, and we've heard a lot today, with our friends across the aisle demagoguing this Medicare issue, that the Republican Party wants to take away Medicare from our seniors. That's absolutely incorrect. We want to save

Medicare. We want to make sure that we preserve it, that we make sure that our seniors, that they get everything that they bargained for, and that we make sure we have a Medicare plan that's in place for future generations. And when I hear my friends across the aisle talk about Medicare, I scratch my head because they're the only ones who ever cut it. In PPACA, the health care reform bill, ObamaCare, they take \$500 billion out of Medicare.

As I talk to seniors around my district, one of the things that makes them so angry is that their Social Security trust fund has been raided for decades, and now the President and the Democrats have raided the Medicare fund as well. I find that to be absolutely unacceptable.

Then you add on top of that the IPAB board, the Independent Payment Advisory Board. This is a board that is going to look at Medicare reimbursement rates, and what they're going to do is lower reimbursements on certain procedures. And Medicare reimbursements are already so low, you reduce them even further, you are going to start to see doctors and hospitals stop providing those services to our seniors. And so, in the end, this IPAB board is going to impact access to care for our current seniors. That is absolutely unacceptable.

We have to keep the promise to our current seniors but also make sure we reform it for future generations so it's saved.

I mean, the President has come out and said we need to reform it. Well, okay, Mr. President, let's reform it, but let's make sure we do it in a way that preserves the benefits for our current retirees and those who are about to retire, and make sure those who might have a different program have enough time to plan their retirement around the new changes. That's exactly what we do.

But they demagogue this issue and our party for trying to fix this great program. I struggle with that. I think it's misrepresenting to the American people about where we stand.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. I appreciate the gentleman raising the issue of Medicare. I'd like to take a few minutes to talk about some of the things I've heard here on the floor tonight.

First of all, if you're just joining us, I can just tell you that a little earlier tonight here on the floor there was a poster being used and the poster showed a tombstone. It showed a tombstone, and it said, "Medicare." And the implication was that Medicare was going to be killed; Medicare was going to be eliminated. And nothing could be further from the truth if we take action to save Medicare. If we allow Medicare to continue as it currently is with no changes, it goes bankrupt in anywhere from 5 to 10 years, if we do nothing.

Now, some of us have done something to save Medicare. What did we do? Well, we came up with a plan as part of

our budget in the House to save Medicare for future generations.

Now, what other plans are out there? Right now, none. The Senate doesn't have a budget. The Senate doesn't have a plan to save Medicare. The President's budget doubles the debt in 5 years, triples it in 10 years, doesn't even deal with entitlements.

□ 2140

It got zero votes in the U.S. Senate and does nothing to save Medicare. In fact, it was so silent on Medicare and entitlements that the President had to come and give a Mulligan speech after we proposed our budget in the House. He gave a speech saying, Well, what I really meant was, and he laid out some ideas, not enough specifics—so few specifics, in fact, that the Congressional Budget Office said, We can't analyze that speech; we can't score that speech, not enough specifics.

So the Senate doesn't have a plan to save it. The President doesn't have a plan to save Medicare. We have a plan to save Medicare.

So what has happened? What has happened is the folks on the other side of the aisle made a conscious decision to attack our plan to save Medicare, and by doing so they engaged in a fiscal fantasy. What does that mean? Well, it means that they compare our reform with the way things are now with Medicare. They say, You're ending Medicare as we know it. Well, the problem with that is Medicare as we know it, on the path that it's currently on, goes bankrupt.

It would be one thing if they were comparing their reform plan to save Medicare with our reform plan to save Medicare, but they're not because they don't have a plan. So they prefer to compare our plan with the way things are now, even though they know the way things are now is going away. In fact, I'd like to read just a couple of quick quotes here.

President Obama has said: "If you look at the numbers, Medicare in particular will run out of money and we will not be able to sustain that program no matter how much taxes go up. I mean, it's not an option for us to just sit by and do nothing."

Now, that's President Obama acknowledging that Medicare is going bankrupt, acknowledging that we must do something to save it, yet he hasn't proposed a plan to save it.

And another quick quote, Senator LIEBERMAN, former Vice Presidential candidate nominee for the Democrat Party, now an Independent, he said: "The truth is that we cannot save Medicare as we know it. We can save Medicare only if we change it."

That is the hard reality, and that is what we are trying to do is save Medicare. And that is precisely what we did in our budget that we adopted this year. If you're 55 or over, there's no change. If you're under 55, you would be in the new program, as Medicare would be constituted, what we call Premium Support. If you're 55 and over, as

the gentleman said, there are no changes to you. We give folks time to transition to a new way of living under Medicare, a different kind of Medicare, but what we think would be more effective at reducing cost by putting in some market forces and saving Medicare for future generations.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. DUFFY. I appreciate the gentleman yielding, and I agree with most everything that you have said here, and very well said.

The one point I disagree with is the President has no other plan, no doubt. With the PPACA bill, the health care reform bill, he does deal with Medicare, make no mistake. That is the Independent Payment Advisory Board, the IPAB board, that is going to systematically reduce reimbursements for seniors.

I think the gentleman said it very well when the President acknowledged that these programs can't sustain themselves on their current course, and so he has addressed it, and my friends across the aisle voted for it. And basically, this is a form of reducing reimbursement, which is a form of reducing access to care for current seniors to reduce the outlays of Medicare. It's a disingenuous, I think, way of basically coming around the corner and saying, You know what? We're going to ration care for our seniors. And I find that to be absolutely unacceptable.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Just real quickly I wanted to point out, just to clarify, I totally agree that he has a plan. Unfortunately, he doesn't have a plan to save Medicare. He only has the plan that he passed in his health care law. And as you pointed out, with the cuts that were in the President's health care law, President Obama's health care law ended Medicare as we know it, because it took \$500 billion out and introduced this unelected board, the IPAB that you so eloquently describe.

So I just wanted to clarify, he has a plan. He doesn't have a plan to save Medicare.

Mr. DUFFY. That's right. And there is but only one plan that saves Medicare, and that is ours. And I should have explained that better. I would agree with you.

But just to reiterate, it's not just us and the President saying that Medicare is going broke. The CBO, the Congressional Budget Office, a nonpartisan group, has said that in 9 years the Medicare trust fund is going bankrupt. The Medicare trustees have come out and said the Medicare trust fund will be broke in 10 years.

So make no mistake, we have to fix it. We have to address Medicare. Let's not sit in this House and demagogue this issue. Let's not throw stones at those who want to fix it. Actually engage in the debate or at least take responsibility for cutting \$500 billion, taking money out of a program that people paid into, and using it for a whole different set of people who didn't

pay into that program. We're robbing this fund, robbing Peter to pay Paul. Let's save Medicare. And you don't save it by robbing it. Let's not rob Medicare.

You know, I think we got in this situation as Americans because all the time our politicians, they come back to their States and their districts and they make promises to their people. They tell them, Listen, I'm going to give you the Sun and the Moon and the stars. Don't worry, we can pay for it, not a big deal. I'm going to keep this promise to you.

And that's how they get elected year after year by making promises. Well, the time has come to say these promises can't be kept. And you know what? I think this freshman class of Republicans have come in and said, We're not going to lie to you anymore. We're going to tell you the truth. The truth is we can't continue on this course. We're going to level with you and say we have to reform it to save it. We can't continue to borrow \$1.5 trillion a year and not have substantial economic consequences for the next generation. We have to fix it. You might not want to hear it, but it's the truth. We're going to give you the truth. We're not going to lie to you anymore.

And I think once we all know where we are at as a country, we can then come together and go as a country. How do we fix the problems that face us as a country? But when we have one party that doesn't want to acknowledge the problems that we face and they want to mislead the American people about those problems, it's hard to have an honest conversation.

Well, I didn't come here to misrepresent to the American people. I've come here to be honest and to level with the American people and say, This is where we're at. Let's find solutions that work for the American people.

There is a chart here that I know so many people have seen, Mr. Speaker; but if you look at it, this is a chart that shows gross domestic product in our years out and our debt to GDP, our debt to the size of our economy. In World War II, our debt was about 100 percent of the size of our economy in a year, but we were at war. It was World War II. That went down. But if you look out, look to our future.

□ 2150

This is a sea of red. This is a sea of debt that we are going to leave to the next generation. Our economy will collapse well before we get to the crest of that wave. But that is our future, make no mistake, unless we change course.

I think it is important to note where does this debt come from. Who is financing this debt, because in World War II, American citizens bought war bonds and paid for this debt. Not today, because in 1970, 5 percent of the debt was held by foreign entities. In 1990, 19 percent of our debt was held by foreign entities. And today, 47 percent of our debt is held by foreign entities. And

guess what country owns the largest share of that foreign debt? That's right, China. China owns about 30 percent of that foreign debt. We are mortgaging our children's future. We are giving the Chinese Government an economic nuclear bomb because we can't get our fiscal house in order in this House.

It is time that we come together and fix the problems that face this country. Let's not kick the can down the road. Let's not let this be the future that our children inherit. But to prevent it, we have to act. And we are here to act.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. When I look at those charts, I ask myself: How big does our debt have to get before the other side of the aisle joins us in getting our fiscal house in order? How big? It is \$14 trillion now—\$16 trillion, \$20 trillion, \$50 trillion? How big does it have to get before the other side of the aisle admits that we are spending too much money?

I will tell you, I have been studying some of the details of our budget and how we got into this mess. I would be remiss if I did not comment on something I heard earlier today. Someone said: Well, the Bush tax cuts created our debt. That's how we got into debt.

Completely untrue. I took a chart that showed our revenue year by year as a percentage of the economy. And after 9/11, certainly the economy slowed down and our revenues, our tax receipts decreased significantly. But I can tell you that by 2007, our tax receipts were back up to about 18.5 percent of GDP. In 2007, and that was before the meltdown of the housing market in 2008, but that was while we had the Bush tax cuts in place—18.5 percent.

Now, what is interesting, if you go back and look at the mid-1990s, there were some years that had a higher percentage of GDP for revenue, but there are several years that are below that. My point is whatever contribution tax rates have had on revenue, the primary driver of how much revenue we get a particular year is whether we are having economic growth. That is the primary driver. That is the primary determining factor of how much money comes into the coffers of the United States Government.

The idea that we got in this mess because we are somehow as Americans not taxed enough is ludicrous. All you have to do is look at the spending pattern and the trajectory of the debt that you just put up there. It follows the same path, revenue relatively steady over the decade at an average of 18 percent of GDP. And expenditures—spending—off the charts, particularly in the last few years.

I just want to be real clear here, both parties are to blame. The Congress is to blame. The House is to blame, the Senate, the White House. There is plenty of blame to go around. There is plenty of blame to go around. That's not the issue. The issue is how we fix it. And we first have to recognize that we have a spending problem.

Mr. DUFFY. Well said to the gentleman from Arkansas.

You know, jobs have been a key component of the debates here in this House because there is a 9.2 percent unemployment rate, and the effective rate is far higher—those who have stopped looking for work or those who are underemployed. People are suffering in our States and districts. We have seen what proposals have come out from the other side of the aisle. Let's take a walk down memory lane.

They told us that ObamaCare was going to create jobs. Well, all it did was give us a health care reform bill that is not going to get the job done, and it is going to cost us an extra trillion dollars over the next 10 years. They gave us a trillion-dollar stimulus bill, and we weren't supposed to see unemployment over 8 percent if that passed. We just found out for every job created or saved, it cost the taxpayer over \$250,000 per job. That is not a job-creating bill.

And now what has happened is they have come into this House and they want to tell the American people that we can create jobs in America if we raise taxes on the job creators. You ask any economist, or you just use common sense, to raise taxes on job creators, to take money away from them, and to think they are going to create jobs when they have less money doesn't make any economic sense.

You raise taxes on your job creators, you have less jobs. And if you have less jobs, then you have less people paying taxes. And if you have less people paying taxes, you have less money coming into the Federal coffers. Let's put America back to work. When America works, they get off the unemployment track and start getting paychecks. I want to see Americans and Wisconsin getting paychecks.

But a lot of the circles around this debt that we face in this country, and I know in my own district, there are people who need help from the government. I want to make sure we have a safety net in place to help those people. I see them all the time, and they need help from the government. I want to make sure that we're there to provide that assistance that they need. Or for those who fall on hard times, I want to make sure that we have a safety net in place to help them.

But let me tell you what, if we continue to borrow and spend this way, there isn't going to be money for those who need the most help. Look to Greece. If you want to see America's future, if we stay on this current course, look to Greece. Look at the protests. When you make promises to people that you can't keep, what happens? They take to the streets and they riot. Let's not lie to the American people. Let's tell them the truth. Let's not let Greece be America's future. Let's make sure we have a great and prosperous country, the same that our Forefathers passed to us.

But to have that, we have to fight for it because the status quo is this: mas-

sive debt. And with that massive debt, you have Greece-like riots in the streets. That is unacceptable. Let's face this challenge head on and make sure that we leave an America that is prosperous, bright, and full of hope for the next generation.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. I just want to close by mentioning the discussion of the debt ceiling. What I would say to the President tonight is that this House has put forth a plan. We have a plan in the form of our budget. But we also have a plan in the form of our Cut, Cap, and Balance where we cut spending and we cap spending in the future and we move toward a balanced budget. We passed that here in the House the tonight. That's a plan. That's a plan that we can debate. We can discuss. The President can criticize. But what we haven't seen from the President is a plan. A plan of his that we can look at and study and that the American people can consider.

I would just ask the President to put his ideas out there. Come out of those rooms and put his ideas in public and let us analyze them and discuss them and let the American people examine for themselves.

Mr. DUFFY. One point, we don't want to do a cabernet dance here. There is no doubt that the proposal that came out the House and passed, it is now going to go to the President. Most Americans know when you buy a house or a car, you make an offer. When you make an offer, the seller makes a counteroffer. We'll wait for the President's counterproposal, if he is going to lead, the leader of the free world. Let's see him put his ideas on paper. Let him show the American people what his ideas are, just as we have shown the American people what our ideas are. I encourage him to do that.

I thank the gentleman from Arkansas for hosting tonight's conversation.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Thank you, and I appreciate the gentleman joining me.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. ELLISON (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and July 20.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REFERRED

A concurrent resolution of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. Con. Res. 25. Concurrent resolution welcoming the independence of the Republic of South Sudan, congratulating the people of South Sudan for freely and peacefully expressing their will through an internationally accepted referendum, and calling on the Governments and people of Sudan and South Sudan to peacefully resolve outstanding issues including the final status of Abyei; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, July 20, 2011, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

OATH OF OFFICE MEMBERS, RESIDENT COMMISSIONER, AND DELEGATES

The oath of office required by the sixth article of the Constitution of the United States, and as provided by section 2 of the act of May 13, 1884 (23 Stat. 22), to be administered to Members, Resident Commissioner, and Delegates of the House of Representatives, the text of which is carried in 5 U.S.C. 3331:

"I, AB, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God."

has been subscribed to in person and filed in duplicate with the Clerk of the House of Representatives by the following Member of the 112th Congress, pursuant to the provisions of 2 U.S.C. 25:

JANICE HAHN, California Thirty-Sixth.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

2533. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) (DFARS Case 2011-D004) (RIN: 0750-AH25) received June 28, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

2534. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS case 2010-D023) (RIN: 0750-AG93) received June 28, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

2535. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS Case 2011-D031) received June 28, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

2536. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS

Case 2011-D035) received June 28, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

2537. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS Case 2011-D034) (RIN: 0750-AH27) received June 28, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

2538. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility [Docket ID: FEMA-2011-0002] [Internal Agency Docket ID: FEMA-8183] received June 20, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2539. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Final Flood Elevation Determinations [Docket ID: FEMA-2011-0002] received June 28, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

2540. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's final rule — Energy Conservation Program: Certification, Compliance, and Enforcement for Consumer Products and Commercial and Industrial Equipment [Docket No.: EERE-2010-BT-CE-0014] (RIN: 1904-AC23) received July 1, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2541. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Division of Freedom of Information; Change of Office Name, Address, Telephone Number, and Fax Number; Technical Amendments [Docket No.: FDA-2011-N-0318] received June 20, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2542. A letter from the Program Manager, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Group Health Plans and Health Insurance Issuers; Rules Relating to Internal Claims and Appeals and External Review Processes [CMS-9993-IFC2] (RIN: 0938-AQ66) received June 29, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2543. A letter from the Program Manager, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — World Trade Center Health Program Requirements for Enrollment, Appeals, Certification of Health Conditions, and Reimbursement [Docket No.: CDC-2011-0009] (RIN: 0920-AA44) received June 29, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2544. A letter from the Deputy Bureau Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Lifeline and Link Up Reform and Modernization; Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service; Lifeline and Link Up [WC Docket No.: 11-42] [CC Docket No.: 96-45] [WC Docket No.: 03-109] received July 1, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2545. A letter from the Deputy Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Rural Health Care Support Mechanism [WC Docket No.: 02-60] received July 1, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2546. A letter from the Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commis-

sion, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Qualification for Cement Grouting for Prestressing Tendons in Containment Structures [Regulatory Guide 1.107, Revision 2] received July 1, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2547. A letter from the Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Personnel Monitoring Device — Direct-Reading Pocket Dosimeters [Regulatory Guide 8.4, Revision 1] received July 1, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2548. A letter from the Assistant Secretary For Export Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Addition of the New State of the Republic of South Sudan to the Export Administration Regulations [Docket No.: 110525299-1322-01] (RIN: 0694-AF27) received July 11, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2549. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary For Export Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Technical Amendment to the Authorization Validated End-User Regulations of the Export Administration Regulations [Docket No.: 110413240-1255-02] (RIN: 0694-AF23) received July 11, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2550. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary For Export Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Paperwork Reduction Act; Updated List of Approved Information Collections and Removal of a Redundant Reporting Requirement [Docket No.: 110224166-1212-01] (RIN: 0694-AF08) received July 11, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2551. A letter from the Associate Director for PP&I, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and Bosnian Serb-Controlled Areas of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina Sanctions Regulations; Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) Kosovo Sanctions Regulations; and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) Milosevic Sanctions Regulations received June 20, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2552. A letter from the Clerk of the House of Representatives, transmitting a letter regarding the election for the 36th Congressional District of California; (H. Doc. No. 112-44); to the Committee on House Administration and ordered to be printed.

2553. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulations, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Amendments to Regulations Regarding Major Life-Changing Events Affecting Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amounts to Medicare Part B Premiums [Docket No.: SSA-2009-0078] (RIN: 0960-AH06) received July 1, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. BACHUS: Committee on Financial Services. Supplemental report on H.R. 1315.

A bill to amend the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection (Rept. 112-89, Pt. 2).

Mr. BACHUS: Committee on Financial Services. Supplemental report on H.R. 1667. A bill to postpone the date for the transfer of functions to the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection if the Bureau does not yet have a Director in place (Rept. 112-93, Pt. 2).

Mr. BACHUS: Committee on Financial Services. Supplemental report on H.R. 1121. A bill to replace the Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection with a five person Commission (Rept. 112-107, Pt. 2).

Mr. SIMPSON: Committee on Appropriations. H.R. 2584. A bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes (Rept. 112-151). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Texas: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 1021. A bill to prevent the termination of the temporary office of bankruptcy judges in certain judicial districts; with an amendment (Rept. 112-152). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Texas: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 1933. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to modify the requirements for admission of nonimmigrant nurses in health professional shortage areas; with an amendment (Rept. 112-153). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Texas: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 2480. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Administrative Conference of the United States for fiscal years 2012, 2013, and 2014, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 112-154). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. WEBSTER: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 357. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2553) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend the airport improvement program, and for other purposes (Rept. 112-155). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Ms. WILSON of Florida:

H.R. 2582. A bill to ensure the availability and affordability of homeowners' insurance coverage for catastrophic events; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN:

H.R. 2583. A bill to authorize appropriations for the Department of State for fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. OLSON:

H.R. 2585. A bill to require that fees for services provided by the Internal Revenue Service be deposited in the Treasury as general receipts; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GARRETT (for himself, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. HURT, and Mr. MEEKS):

H.R. 2586. A bill to refine the definition of swap execution facility in the provisions regulating swap markets added by title VII of

the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. KLINE, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. GOWDY):

H.R. 2587. A bill to prohibit the National Labor Relations Board from ordering any employer to close, relocate, or transfer employment under any circumstance; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 2588. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to sell certain Federal land, to direct that the proceeds of such sales be applied to reduce the Federal budget deficit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BERMAN:

H.R. 2589. A bill to prohibit certain activities in support of the Arab League boycott of Israel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. CROWLEY (for himself, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. REYES, Ms. SEWELL, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. WU, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. FILNER):

H.R. 2590. A bill to ensure that seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities who receive Social Security and certain other Federal benefits, as well as Federal, State, and local government retirees, receive a one-time \$250 payment due to there being no cost-of-living adjustment in 2011; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Veterans' Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 2591. A bill to extend Federal recognition to the Muscogee Nation of Florida; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 2592. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the limitation on the amount of charitable contributions of ordinary income property taken into account in determining the charitable contribution deduction for any trade or business; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. SPEIER (for herself and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 2593. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to terminate the Presidential \$1 Coin Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Ms. WILSON of Florida:

H.R. 2582.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN:

H.R. 2583.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. SIMPSON:

H.R. 2584.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The principal constitutional authority for this legislation is clause 7 of section 9 of article I of the Constitution of the United States (the appropriation power), which states: "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law" In addition, clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution (the spending power) provides: "The Congress shall have the Power . . . to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States" Together, these specific constitutional provisions establish the congressional power of the purse, granting Congress the authority to appropriate funds, to determine their purpose, amount, and period of availability, and to set forth terms and conditions governing their use.

By Mr. OLSON:

H.R. 2585.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18—The Congress shall have Power To . . . make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof. (Necessary and Proper Regulations to Effectuate Powers)

By Mr. GARRETT:

H.R. 2586.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 ("The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States"), 3 ("To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes"), and 18 ("To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof").

By Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina:

H.R. 2587.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 2588.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 which states that Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. BERMAN:

H.R. 2589.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mr. CROWLEY:

H.R. 2590.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8—Powers of Congress

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 2591.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 2592.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. SPEIER:

H.R. 2593.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 10: Mr. PITTS.

H.R. 58: Mr. LUETKEMEYER and Mr. BACHUS.

H.R. 104: Mr. LIPINSKI.

H.R. 139: Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 178: Mr. MILLER of North Carolina and Mr. CHANDLER.

H.R. 181: Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Mr. JONES.

H.R. 371: Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado, Mr. ROSS of Florida, Mr. PENCE, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, and Mrs. ROBY.

H.R. 376: Mr. CRITZ.

H.R. 402: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 452: Mr. SHIMKUS, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. COLE, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. BONNER, and Mr. MCKEON.

H.R. 502: Ms. DEGETTE.

H.R. 589: Mr. HOLT.

H.R. 640: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 668: Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. MCCOTTER, Ms. RICHARDSON, and Mr. SMITH of Texas.

H.R. 674: Mr. KELLY, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. HINCHEY, and Mr. CLEAVER.

H.R. 687: Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana.

H.R. 721: Mr. COLE, Mr. COBLE, Mr. BERG, Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana, and Ms. SUTTON.

H.R. 735: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 750: Mr. GOODLATTE and Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 769: Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 831: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 890: Mr. RIVERA and Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 923: Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 975: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 1041: Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 1046: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 1049: Mr. MCCOTTER.

H.R. 1058: Mr. LANDRY.

H.R. 1066: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 1103: Mr. GONZALEZ and Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA.

H.R. 1116: Ms. HANABUSA.
H.R. 1120: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.
H.R. 1127: Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia.
H.R. 1183: Ms. BORDALLO.
H.R. 1219: Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 1259: Mr. LUETKEMEYER and Mr. TIBERI.
H.R. 1293: Mr. PAYNE and Mr. GUTIERREZ.
H.R. 1307: Mr. ROYCE.
H.R. 1332: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. MICA, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. BARROW, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. WOLF, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. LONG, Mr. MORAN, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. PETRI, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. HEINRICH, and Mr. CASSIDY.
H.R. 1348: Mr. HIMES, Ms. DELAURO, and Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 1381: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 1397: Mr. PALLONE.
H.R. 1464: Mr. LATHAM, Mr. DOLD, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. DOGGETT, and Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado.
H.R. 1489: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 1497: Ms. PINGREE of Maine.
H.R. 1509: Mr. SCHOCK and Mr. REICHERT.
H.R. 1543: Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 1546: Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. PASTOR of Arizona, and Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 1547: Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 1550: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 1556: Mr. HEINRICH.
H.R. 1564: Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 1588: Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS.
H.R. 1653: Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 1706: Ms. SUTTON.
H.R. 1735: Mr. McDERMOTT.
H.R. 1742: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.
H.R. 1744: Mrs. ELLMERS.
H.R. 1755: Mr. LOBIONDO and Mr. BENISHEK.
H.R. 1756: Mr. JONES and Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 1780: Mrs. MALONEY.
H.R. 1792: Mr. BURTON of Indiana.
H.R. 1798: Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 1803: Mr. LANDRY.
H.R. 1834: Mr. BENISHEK.
H.R. 1840: Mr. KINGSTON.
H.R. 1854: Mr. HINCHEY.
H.R. 1855: Ms. BERKLEY.
H.R. 1865: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.
H.R. 1941: Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia and Mr. McDERMOTT.
H.R. 1946: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H.R. 1976: Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California.
H.R. 1981: Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas.
H.R. 1996: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. HASTINGS of Washington.
H.R. 2011: Mr. MANZULLO and Mr. QUAYLE.
H.R. 2033: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 2068: Mr. SCALISE.
H.R. 2087: Mr. HARRIS.
H.R. 2104: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. STIVERS, and Ms. McCOLLUM.
H.R. 2123: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona.
H.R. 2139: Mr. NUNES and Mr. ALEXANDER.
H.R. 2163: Ms. DEGETTE and Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 2164: Mr. BURGESS and Mr. SULLIVAN.

H.R. 2176: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 2224: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 2233: Mr. REYES.
H.R. 2245: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Mr. JONES.
H.R. 2247: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 2248: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 2250: Mrs. NOEM, Mr. LONG, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, and Mr. KELLY.
H.R. 2268: Mr. CONAWAY and Mr. FORTENBERRY.
H.R. 2307: Ms. WOOLSEY.
H.R. 2313: Mr. FLORES.
H.R. 2342: Mr. STARK and Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 2357: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 2366: Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. FILNER, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. HECK.
H.R. 2368: Mr. CLAY, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA.
H.R. 2387: Mr. KING of New York and Mr. CROWLEY.
H.R. 2400: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 2402: Mr. BROOKS.
H.R. 2414: Mr. PAUL and Mr. BURTON of Indiana.
H.R. 2426: Mr. BACHUS, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. BOREN, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. CANSECO, Mr. CARTER, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. GRIMM, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. ISSA, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. KELLY, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. LANDRY, Mr. LATTA, Mrs. BONO MACK, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. MCCARTHY of California, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. NUNNELEE, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. QUAYLE, Mr. REED, Mr. RIGELL, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. WALSH of Illinois, Mr. WOMACK, and Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.
H.R. 2429: Mr. GIBBS and Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 2444: Mr. DICKS.
H.R. 2457: Mr. HUNTER.
H.R. 2472: Mr. PAUL.
H.R. 2479: Mr. CARNAHAN.
H.R. 2482: Mr. KILDEE and Mr. CLARKE of Michigan.
H.R. 2485: Mrs. HARTZLER and Mrs. ROBY.
H.R. 2492: Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. HOLDEN, and Mr. KUCINICH.
H.R. 2497: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 2507: Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. CANSECO, and Mr. LONG.
H.R. 2509: Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 2514: Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 2534: Mr. DUFFY and Mr. BROOKS.
H.R. 2537: Mr. CLAY.
H.R. 2541: Mr. HASTINGS of Washington.
H.R. 2544: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 2545: Mr. BOREN, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. CHANDLER, and Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana.
H.R. 2554: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 2560: Mr. CHABOT and Mrs. NOEM.
H.R. 2567: Mr. ELLISON, Mr. STARK, and Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 2568: Mr. CANSECO.
H.R. 2576: Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 2578: Mr. CARDOZA.

H.R. 2580: Mr. RANGEL and Mrs. MALONEY.
H.J. Res. 2: Mr. BARROW.
H.J. Res. 10: Mr. LIPINSKI and Mr. CHANDLER.
H.J. Res. 69: Mr. PERLMUTTER and Mr. HANNA.
H. Con. Res. 44: Mr. GRIMM.
H. Con. Res. 63: Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia.
H. Con. Res. 64: Mr. RUSH.
H. Res. 47: Mr. SABLAN.
H. Res. 111: Mr. POSEY and Mr. ROSS of Arkansas.
H. Res. 141: Mrs. HARTZLER.
H. Res. 213: Mr. GRIMM.
H. Res. 306: Ms. BERKLEY.
H. Res. 342: Mr. TONKO.
H. Res. 353: Ms. SEWELL and Mr. McDERMOTT.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rules XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. MICA

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure in H.R. 2553 do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. CAMP

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Ways and Means on H.R. 2553, the "Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2011, Part IV," do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 451: Mr. BOSWELL.

AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVIII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 2551

OFFERED BY MR. THOMPSON OF PENNSYLVANIA

AMENDMENT No. 1: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. 211. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to purchase, acquire, install, or use any medium screw base compact fluorescent lamp or light bulb.